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ABSTRACT

This manual is intended for use by adopters or adapters of a media-oriented arts and humanities program designed to train teachers in the techniques of humanizing the general curriculum. The first chapter presents an overview of the program and outlines the theoretical model upon which it is based. The second chapter relates the theory to actual teaching through an analysis of lesson transcripts, and the final chapter deals with practical approaches to teacher training for the program. (FL)

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MOPPET

THEORY and PRACTICE

ED169552

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FOREWORD

The following is from the abstract in the original MOPPET FSEA Title III proposal of 1970:

> MOPPET (Media-Oriented Program to Promote Exploration in Teaching) is based on the recognition of the need to train teachers in the creative integration of the humanities into the curriculum, and to develop an accompanying teachers' manual for wide distribution.
>
> The creative use of media will enable teachers to create a classroom methodology and environment which will in turn promote creativity in children, and also help them develop a sense of the interrelatedness of the various disciplines.
>
> At the kindergarten level the focus will be on the arts: music, art, literature and dance. In the course of development upward through the grades, other elements of the curriculum will be integrated in the program (science, etc.). Personnel from within the system will be used to implement the program except in specific cases where outside specialists will be needed for in-service training of teachers or for evaluation.

The wording of that proposal made it quite clear that a methodology was to be developed through which the humanizing influence of the arts could be integrated into the general curriculum. If the intent of the program had been interpreted to mean that everyone should start at his current level of understanding, we might have achieved a broad initial involvement of teachers, but in that circumstance it appeared that there could be no consensus for concerted action leading to what could be considered a new methodology. However, even assuming that a teacher consensus could have been developed concerning the desirability of a common methodology, it was obvious that such a consensus could not be arrived at unless the idea of creativity were omitted. For teachers in general did not understand what creativity meant in terms of the teaching process.

This is the reason that MOPPET was developed within the Woodbridge school system by a relatively independent staff made up primarily of teachers of the arts. The staff developed lessons that demonstrated the theorized methodology. After the lessons had undergone a process of teaching and revision, they were made available to the regular classroom teacher.

We assumed that the new lessons would at first be technically difficult for many teachers; also we expected that most would experience some difficulty with the arts. As it turned out these problems were indeed vexing, but they were not insurmountable. In the area of creativity we expected even greater difficulties. However, the dimension of the difficulty far exceeded our worst fears, a dimension that in fact involved the basic way teachers view the teaching process. Apparently very few teachers understand that the teaching of the creative process is different from being a creative teacher (although that obviously is desirable also); i.e., lessons in which students exercise their individual creativity are different from those lessons in which the teacher demonstrates personal creativity but which do not provide for the students to do likewise. The realization of this fact caused us to go in the direction of developing a teacher training experience that would provide for teacher insight into creativity from both the teacher and student viewpoints.

Since the problems involved in effective MOPPET training could not all be solved through the standard teacher training procedures, we gradually, through trial and error, developed new approaches that were more effective. This manual describes in detail the basic features of the newer approaches. The manual is divided into three sections: (1) explains the theory of the MOPPET lesson process, (2) illustrates how the process works in different disciplines, and (3) describes MOPPET teacher training.

The manual was developed primarily as an aid to potential adopters, but it can also serve as a guide to anyone who wants a detailed explanation of the MOPPET process. It is written basically from the viewpoint of the teacher. However, it should be equally valuable to administrators who are interested in humanistic teacher growth and development.

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CHAPTER I

Theory

OVERVIEW OF MOPPET

Project MOPPET (Media-Oriented Program Promoting Exploration in Teaching) was developed through funding from Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The original K-6 program was developed in 1970-71 through 1972-73. At present, the program is in the third year of development at the junior high school level where the emphasis is on the problems of the drop-out prone and the underachiever. The theoretical material contained in this manual refers to process and, therefore, is relevant to secondary as well as to elementary education.

MOPPET is a humanities program that focuses on the curriculum through the arts: music, art, poetry, creative drama, movement and filmmaking. The objective is to get more of the creative experience contained in the broad range of the arts into the general classroom curriculum. Thus the MOPPET concept of "humanizing" the curriculum means to create a broader, richer learning climate in which the individual is encouraged to develop his/her creative abilities.

During the course of program development, the MOPPET staff conceptualized and refined a flexible teaching process that is adaptable to virtually any discipline. The illumination of this teaching process is the purpose of this manual.

The MOPPET K-6 Teachers Manual and a replication manual, MOPPET: How To Do It, should, along with this manual, form a comprehensive basis for teacher training in the MOPPET process. At the conclusion of the junior high school project in 1975-76, teachers' manuals will be available for grades 7-9.

The MOPPET program has been adopted as a regular part of the curriculum in the elementary schools of Woodbridge Township. The project has been validated by the standards and guidelines of the United States Office of Education as being innovative, successful, cost-effective and exportable. As a result, MOPPET has been funded in the 1973-74, 1974-75 and 1975-76 as a dissemination site through Title III of the New Jersey Elementary and Secondary Education Act. At the present time the program is being adapted/adopted in at least twenty-five school systems in New Jersey.

INTRODUCTION TO LESSON PROCESS

The promotion of creative behavior is the central concern of MOPPET. The idea of promoting creative behavior is the key concept for teachers because creative experience on the part of the teacher cannot be made to substitute for creative experience on the part of the child--the child must exercise his/her own creative abilities in order to receive the kind of personal benefit that leads to creative growth. Thus the "creative teacher" is very important, but it must be understood that the creative teacher is the agent who structures situations through which the child may exercise creativity.

The objective of this manual is to articulate a process that enables teachers to structure lessons in ways that promote student creativity. We call it the "MOPPET lesson process." In order to facilitate the understanding of this process, we will explain first the theoretical base and then proceed to show how this theory is put into practice in MOPPET lessons.

In The Aims of Education, Alfred North Whitefield describes his conception of the three essential elements contained in intellectual progress. He calls them Romance, Precision and Generalization. His conception is an application to education of Hegel's classic analysis of the three stages of progress: Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis. It is Whitehead's contention that "Each lesson in its minor way should form an eddy cycle issuing in its own subordinate process. Longer periods should issue in definite attainments, which then form the starting grounds for fresh cycles."[1]

In MOPPET we have found, after years of exploration into the varied possibilities involved in learning, that an effective lesson does indeed contain three main components, and that these components do in essence correspond to Hegel's idea of Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis. However, like Whitehead, we did not find the names of Hegel's stages to be suggestive for our purposes. Therefore, we developed descriptive designations that conveyed better the intent of the three main parts of a MOPPET lesson, these designations being: INPUT, INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE.

A conceptual model has been developed which shows how these three aspects are handled in MOPPET lessons. This model deals with both the cognitive and affective avenues of learning. In our opinion, it is virtually impossible in practice to completely separate the cognitive and

[1]Alfred North Whitehead, The Aims of Education, (New York: The Free Press, 1967) p. 19.

affective domains. This has been true under the traditional teaching style and it appears true also in the newer styles. However, to facilitate the kind of general understanding that can be consciously acted upon, we think it necessary to arbitrarily separate the cognitive and affective areas. Therefore, the MOPPET lesson model presents both domains in a manner so each can be seen and understood in terms of its general characteristics. To describe the teaching approach appropriate to each learning domain, the familiar convergent mode will be used to designate the cognitive approach, and the divergent will apply to the affective. In addition to associating the cognitive with the traditional practice and the divergent with the affective, we have found that it is also helpful to think of the cognitive/traditional as the "pouring in" of content and skills (teacher-oriented) and the affective/divergent as the "drawing out" approach in which the objective is to draw out the responses and ideas of the individual (student-oriented).

We must make clear that we are very well aware that the cognitive and the affective domains are not in fact so neatly separable as we have constructed them. However, there should be no serious argument against the contention that the traditional approach to teaching has been predominantly a cognitive, teacher-centered method that was devoted to "pouring in" a preconceived body of content and skills. Conversely, there should be no serious disagreement with the idea that the self knowingness of the individual is achieved through an affective, student-centered method which, in terms of teaching, is achieved mainly through a "drawing out" process. This student-centered approach is a relatively recent idea in America, one

that is not well understood by teachers. Therefore, for the sake of clarity we are describing the cognitive "pouring in" and the affective "drawing out" as opposites. However (and this is very important) the fact that the two styles are opposites in terms of the mode of inquiry or thought, they nevertheless are not mutually exclusive: both may be used very effectively in a given lesson. That is, in the course of a lesson the teacher may move from one mode to the other in accordance with the changing lesson requirements. Thus a teacher may handle the "pouring in" of directions, explanations and factual content in the customary teacher-centered mode. Then, for the purposes of activating the creative process, the teacher may move to the student-centered mode, which will be characterized by a "drawing out" dialogue between the teacher and students. Consequently, there should be no concern over which mode of teaching is the best, but rather there should be concern for selecting the appropriate mode for each lesson objective.

In the remainder of Chapter I we will show how the divergent and the convergent styles of teaching fit into the MOPPET conceptual model. In this theoretical model we will attempt to make clear how the divergent approach is used in promoting the creative process. In the following chapter we will analyze the transcripts of MOPPET lessons as they were actually taught. In that way we will relate the theory of Chapter I with the actual practice in Chapter II. Chapter III will deal with practical approaches to teacher training for MOPPET.

LESSON MODEL

The model begins with the three main components of the lesson process: INPUT, INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE. It must be understood that in the MOPPET process, each of these components must be adequately dealt with if the lesson is to succeed.

In Figure I under INPUT we include all print, media, verbal and environmental content of the lesson.

In MOPPET lessons the INPUT is customarily very well thought out in a manner that corresponds with the objectives of the lesson. Frequently the A-V presentations are elaborate because they are intended to be the primary motivational force, and their impact must extend throughout the lesson.

Enthusiasm, curiosity and willingness to discuss the INPUT are the customary student responses teachers may look for in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the presentation.

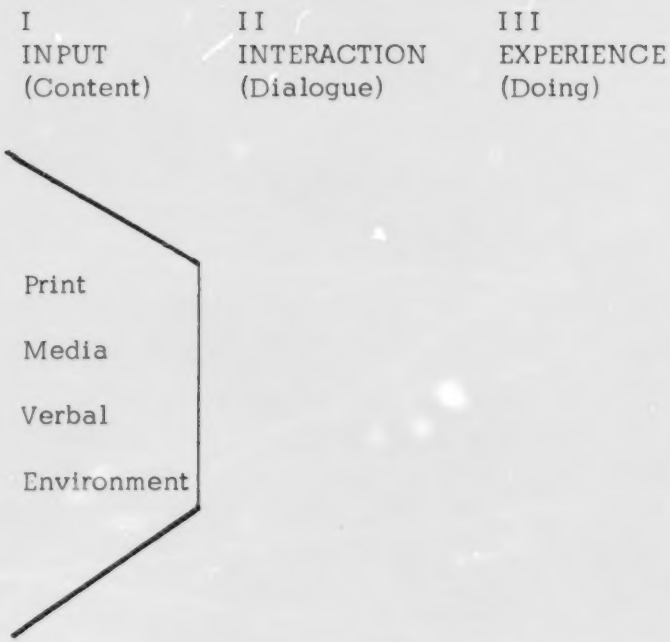


Figure 1. INPUT-Convergent Mode

In Figure 2 under INTERACTION we describe the convergent nature of the conventional cognitive teaching process, which is teacher-oriented with specific goals in view. The characteristics and process of this teaching mode are familiar to all of us and no effort will be made here to elaborate.

In MOPPET lessons this cognitive orientation may occupy a very negligible part of the lesson, or it may take up a much larger part if the lesson objectives demand it. In any case, this convergent element is virtually never completely absent.

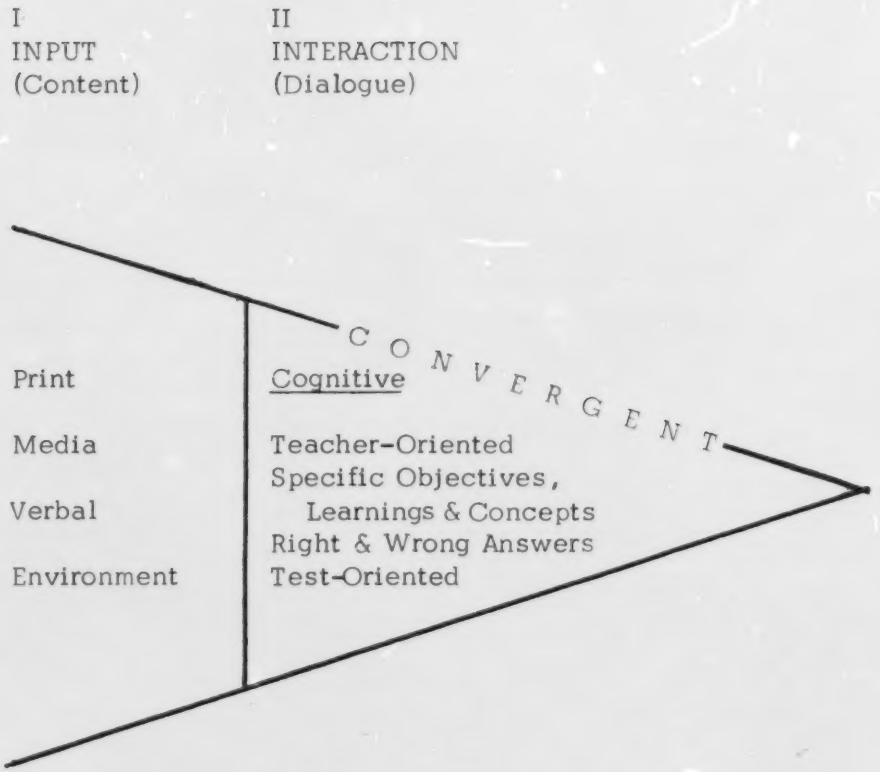


Figure 2. INTERACTION-Convergent Mode

In Figure 3 under EXPERIENCE we describe the outcomes that are aimed for in the cognitive mode. The figure gives a reasonable picture of the conventional teaching process. This process is familiar to all teachers, and MOPPET learnings that are achievable through this method are usually handled very well by most teachers, and without the need for any aid beyond the MOPPET Teachers' Manual.

We have no examples in MOPPET that illustrate the exclusive use of the cognitive mode. In fact, technically speaking, a lesson that does not have a deliberately structured affective element cannot be a MOPPET lesson.

Therefore, it is the affective aspect of the process that we must thoroughly clarify in order for the MOPPET program to be readily accessible to teachers everywhere.

At the present time we have made considerable progress in conceptualizing the affective mode. To illustrate it, the remainder of this conceptual model will be carried out with dotted lines, which will denote the course of the divergent instructional approach. Thus, we will construct a picture that will show how we gain access to both the affective and cognitive domains of learning.

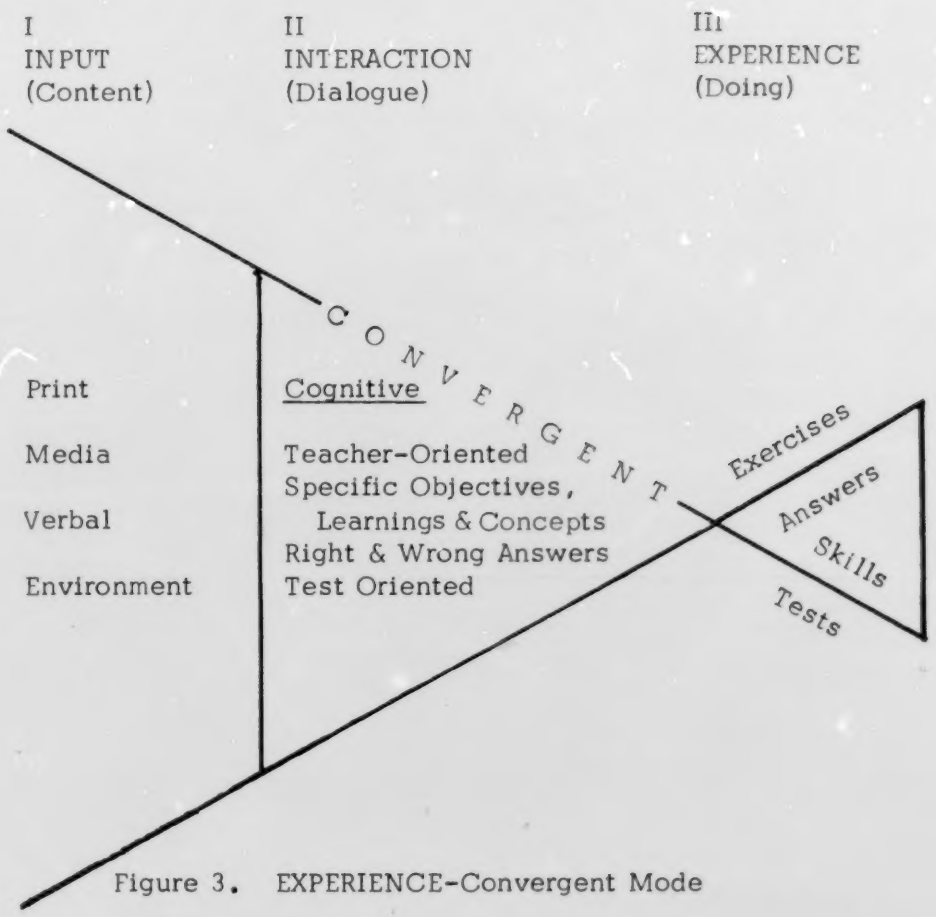


Figure 3. EXPERIENCE-Convergent Mode

In Figure 4 the divergent (dotted) lines branch out under INTERACTION, which represents the broad nature of the process involved in creating a student-oriented situation in which the usual instructional mode of "pouring in" is reversed and replaced with a "drawing out" process.

The drawing out process is necessary in order for children to conceptualize their own personal responses and ideas. Note that the test-orientation and the resulting tests and exercises have disappeared from the cognitive model. This is done to remove impediments to the free flow of student expression. In short, the test-oriented approach is now absent from both the cognitive and affective realms.

In the course of the INTERACTION dialogue the questioning of the teacher should focus on drawing out as many unique responses from as many students as possible. In order to do this successfully the teacher must exercise tolerance for poor quality responses. This does not mean that poor responses should be highly praised, but that teacher should refrain from negative comments and physical gestures that will demoralize the students and inhibit further exploration. The objective at this point is not to evaluate responses, but rather to help children formulate their personal responses into ideas that can be used in the EXPERIENCE part of the lesson.

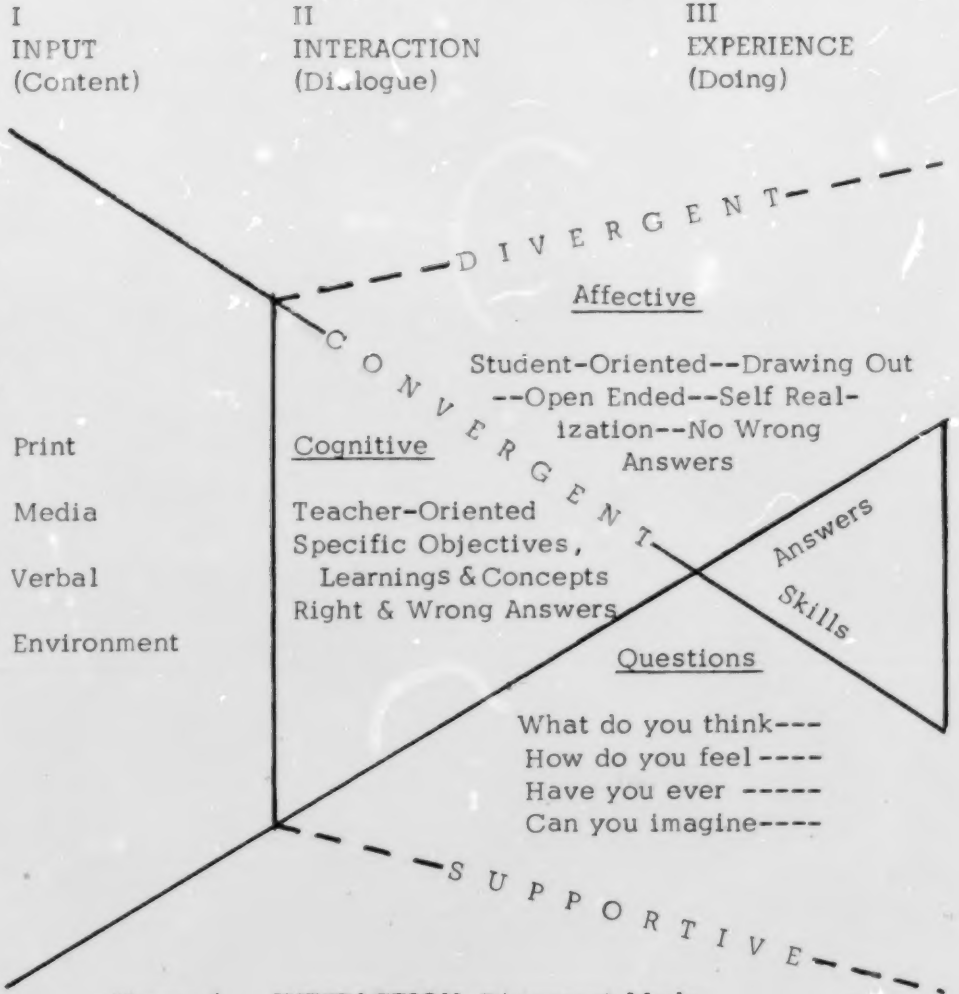


Figure 4. INTERACTION-Divergent Mode

The idea of suspending the customary system of rewards, criticism and testing may bother some teachers. This problem will be discussed in greater detail later in Chapter II.

In Figure 5 under EXPERIENCE we note that the range of reactions now includes the cognitive, but the range has been greatly widened to include the individual responses of all the students.

This wide range of responses is the essence of the divergent mode of instruction. Such varied response does not naturally occur under convergent instruction except in the case of extremely imaginative children, who might be considered gifted in that respect. However, under the divergent method even the least imaginative child is positively encouraged to increase that faculty.

It is from this pool of responses and ideas, whether vaguely or completely formed, that the child is able to draw the inspiration for his/her creative expression during the EXPERIENCE. The reader will note that the EXPERIENCE in the divergent model is only properly beginning; whereas in the conventional cognitive model it has ended with the display of answers, skills, etc.

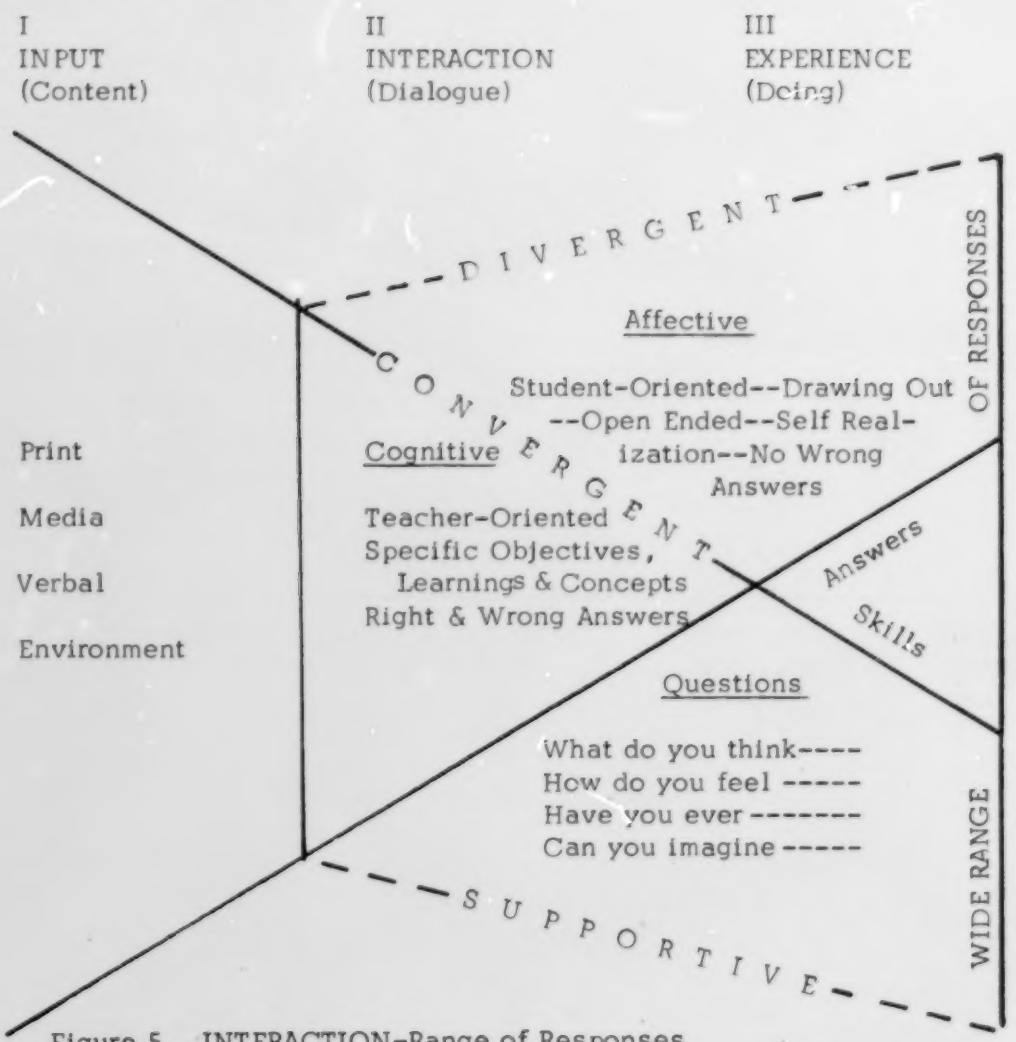


Figure 5. INTERACTION-Range of Responses

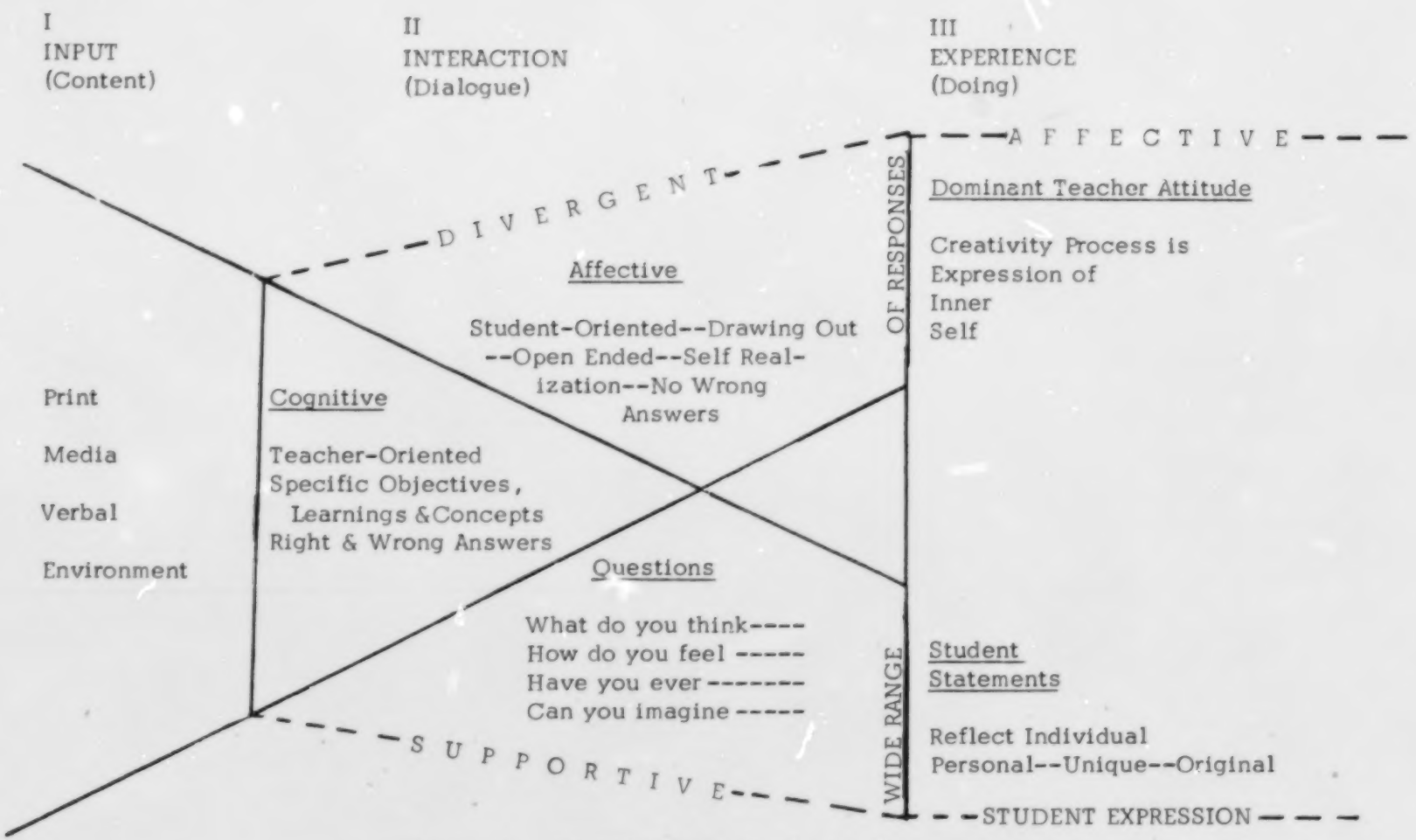


Figure 6. EXPERIENCE-Individual Statements

In Figure 6 the EXPERIENCE is extended to enable students to engage in arts experience. During this process the teaching approach must consistently be non-critical and accepting of all student statements. This is necessary in order to promote growth in all of the students regardless of their initial level of competence. The resulting student statements should represent them and not the preconceptions of the teacher.

When all the children are brought dynamically into the positive spirit of creative activities, the teacher need not worry about quality. The best the children can do is usually on a high level and frequently astonishingly so.

In evaluating the success of a MOPPET lesson, teachers should look first at the work of the group as a whole. If the work displays great variety it is likely that the children have consciously departed from the customary pattern of seeking to produce the correct response expected by the teacher. In short, children should seek the individual, and they must have confidence that the teacher will accept it.

In addition to diversity of expression within the group, the teacher should look for eloquence and evidence of deep personal involvement in the individual statements. Those responses that are of poor quality should not be held up for unfavorable comparison, but should be taken for what they are--the best the student can or will produce at that point. Therefore, such statements should be viewed as an exercise in becoming. The following are examples of positive comments the teacher might use: "Your movement is showing more variety." "I like the closing line of your poem." "Where is this picture going?" Usually there is something in a child's statement that can be used as a basis for encouragement.

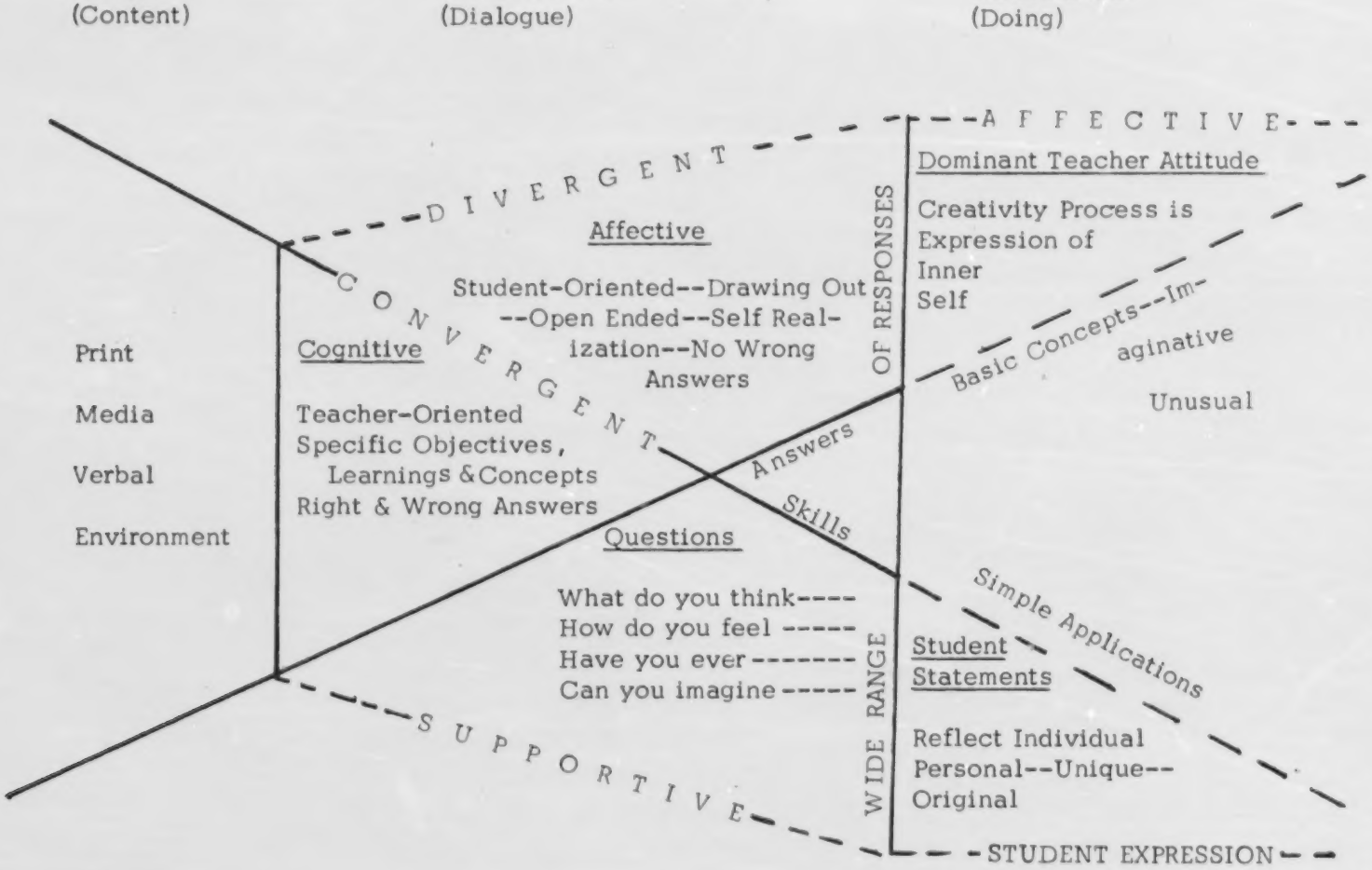


Figure 7. EXPERIENCE-Imaginative Applications

The cognitive element has not ended in Figure 7, but rather the concepts and skills, which were kept simple in deference to the limited arts background of the classroom teacher, are brought into interaction with the personal ideas of the children, which results in imaginative applications. The steadily widening cognitive lines point out that the affective contents are merging with the cognitive, resulting in an increasing self-realization by the child. The cognitive lines never reach the extreme outside lines because there always remains an element of the unknown in the creative process.

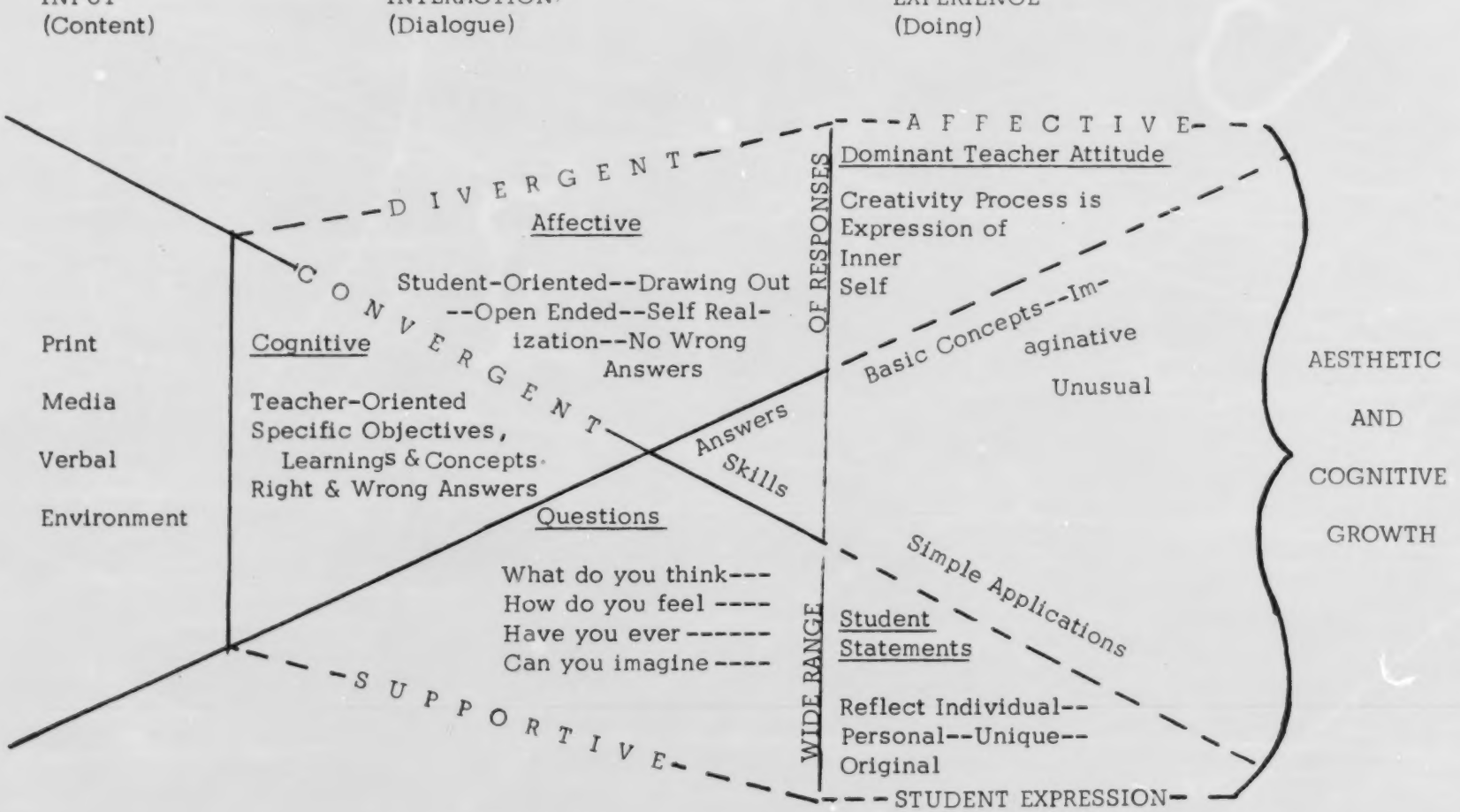


Figure 8. Complete MOPPET Lesson Process

In Figure 8 the final bracket denotes that when this process is brought successfully to a conclusion, the result is both aesthetic and cognitive growth.

The success we have had in using this kind of explanation has led us to a complete reappraisal of our approach to teacher training. At the be-

ginning of the project we felt that the best way to reach teachers was to start with a general overview and then to proceed through the means of demonstrations and explanations to a more detailed understanding. It was felt that basic understanding would arrive through increasing familiarity. This approach worked with the MOPPET staff and with those others who went along with us far enough to discover the basic process. The general failure of this approach resulted from the fact that we were not able to expose the general run of teachers for a long enough time. We were further troubled by the fact that teachers from outside the school system had an even shorter exposure to the program.

The new approach, as shown above, starts with the abstract intellectualization of the process, which in turn is applied to the lessons. Since the cognitive approach is included in this paradigm, teachers are helped to see that the traditional cognitive method and the MOPPET affective approach do not necessarily conflict, if each is understood and used in the appropriate places in the lesson process. Presented in this way, teachers can readily see what is familiar in the process and what is not, and they are spared the inner conflict that so often results from the common impression that one style is necessarily "better" than another.

LESSON FORMAT

We initially believed teachers would find it easier to assimilate lessons in the MOPPET Teachers Manual if we adopted a familiar lesson format. However, in practice we found that the familiar format did not communicate to teachers how the lessons were to be taught, nor did it make clear the fact that different kinds of lessons are handled differently. The fact is that we greatly underestimated the difficulties teachers would have in organizing and carrying out the teaching process. It is true that we wanted to allow enough room for flexibility and for differences in individual teaching styles. Nevertheless, our approach placed too great of a burden on teachers.

To alleviate this problem, our Curriculum Specialist, Mrs. Rosemarie Mazzeo, has devised a series of forms that visually and conceptually accommodate the most common approaches used in MOPPET lessons. The MOPPET teachers have found that these forms make it much easier to write up the lessons.

Each lesson now uses this standardized format:

I. Objectives of this lesson-

At the end of this lesson the child will be able to:

II. Equipment (list all machines, equipment, tools, screens, etc.)

III. Materials (list all films, slides, transparencies, records, tapes, etc.) Please cite complete bibliography for commercial materials.

IV. For lesson procedure choose the form that fits best:

Form A - Input
Interaction
Experience

Form B - Input-Interaction
Experience

Form C - Input-Interaction-Experience

Form D - Input
Interaction-Experience

The forms in IV above are very simple arrangements of the main components of MOPPET lessons: INPUT, INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE. Figure 9 illustrates Form A, the simplest since each section is separated, and they follow one another in order. This is a very common form in the art lessons.

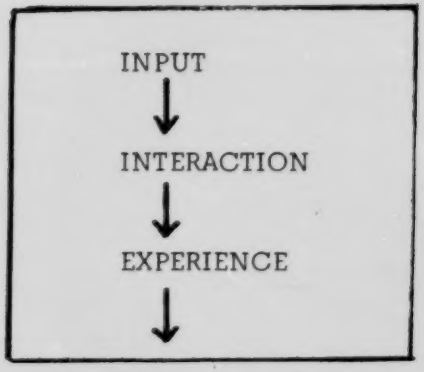


Figure 9. Lesson Form A

Figure 10 shows Form B. The INPUT and INTERACTION interact or overlap, but the experience is separate. This is a very common form in the poetry, art, filmmaking and music lessons.

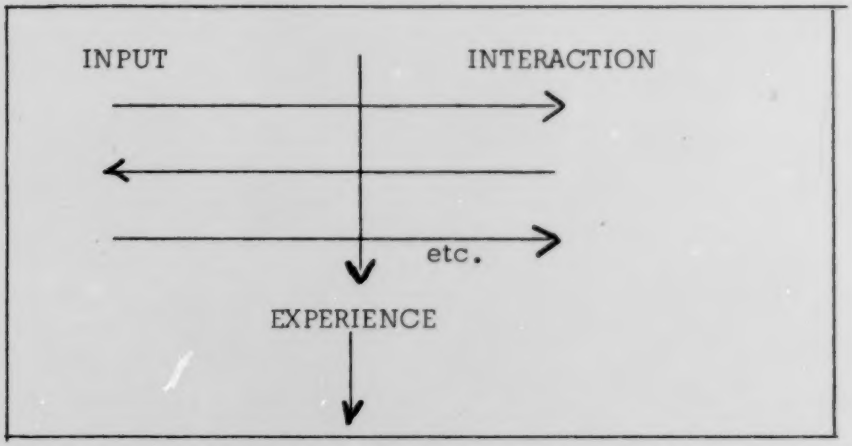


Figure 10. Lesson Form B

Figure 11 shows Form C. The INPUT, INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE all interact or overlap. This is the most frequently used form in movement lessons.

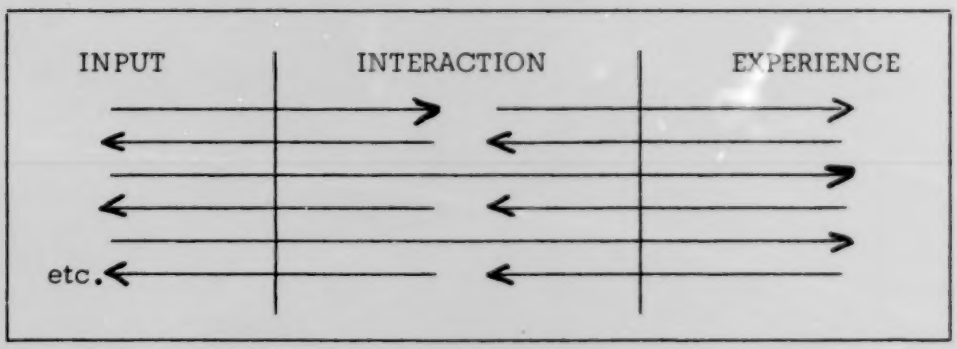


Figure 11. Lesson Form C

Figure 12 shows Form D. The INPUT is separate, but the INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE overlap or interact. This form is used frequently in the creative drama and poetry lessons.

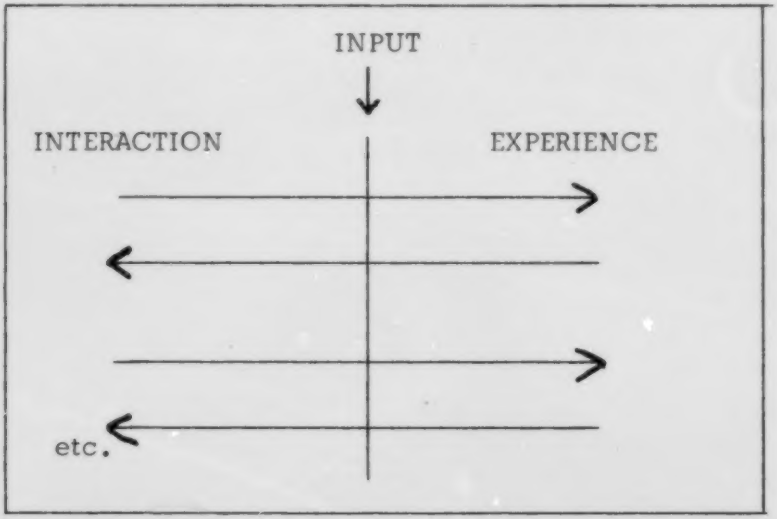


Figure 12. Lesson Form D

We will ultimately rewrite the lessons that were developed prior to the development of the new lesson model and forms. All the rationales and other explanatory material will also be modified to conform to the new conceptions. When the new materials are finished they will be duplicated and made available to other school systems at cost, as was the case with the original materials.

These formats make clear to teachers the general organization of the lessons. More detailed planning can be done within these frameworks if the teacher wishes. Examples of how these lesson forms are used will be found in Chapter II.

Summary Note: In closing Chapter I we would like to reemphasize that the MOPPET program has been developed to help teachers on the road to exploration of their own ideas. The MOPPET lesson and theoretical material is intended only as a guide, and not as a rigid set of rules. Therefore, teachers should look upon our detailed explanatory material as an avenue leading ultimately to greater freedom in their own teaching.

Thus it is desirable that the lessons developed in the project be viewed as prototype lessons, a shortcut through which the teacher can be introduced to the MOPPET process. Similarly the theoretical material presented in this chapter is intended to help facilitate an understanding of that process. In Chapter II we will relate the theory of the present chapter to four sample prototype lessons taken from the MOPPET teachers' manuals. We hope that this procedure will aid the reader in synthesizing the theory and practice of MOPPET.

CHAPTER II

Practice

INTRODUCTION TO SAMPLE LESSONS

Up to this point, we have dealt almost exclusively with the theory underlying MOPPET lessons. What is needed now is to show how this theory is practiced. To do this, we have selected four sample lessons: one each from kindergarten, grade three, grade five and grade seven.

These lessons are not intended to illustrate perfect teaching--if indeed such a thing exists in real life classrooms. Rather they have been selected as examples of effective lessons that demonstrate the MOPPET process.

The first three lessons were taught by members of the MOPPET project staff. The lessons were taught as demonstration lessons for the classroom teacher, using the observing teacher's class. It is necessary to mention this because readers will notice that the MOPPET teachers and the classes are somewhat new to each other. The last lesson was taught by a seventh grade social studies teacher to one of his classes.

The first lesson is a kindergarten art lesson called "Clouds." The lesson plan from the MOPPET Teachers Manual K-3 is fairly conventional in that it contains the basic essentials of the lesson. However, in the procedure (p. 24) it will be noted that lesson Form B was selected because it denoted that the INPUT and INTERACTION dialogue should be organized side by side so that they could be covered simultaneously.

GRADE - KINDERGARTEN

LESSON ON SHAPES: Clouds

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson the child will be able to:

Express ideas artistically as well as verbally.

Demonstrate imaginative thinking through composition.

Demonstrate sensitivity to form.

Demonstrate appreciation of form in the environment.

Sharpen perception in relation of form and color changes during the course of twenty-four hours.

Show pride in a finished art work.

EQUIPMENT

- Slide projector
- Projection screen

MATERIALS

- MOPPET Kit

  Set of slides showing actual photographs of clouds.

  Set of slides made from illustrations in the book, It Looked Like Spilt Milk, by Charles Shaw, Harper & Row, 1967, or the book itself.

- Also

  9 x 12 assorted construction paper

  Paste

  Scissors

  Crayons

LESSON SCHEME

INPUT	INTERACTION
Show book or slides, It Looked Like Spilt Milk. Children see white abstract shapes on blue backgrounds.	Discuss the slides with the children: "What do you see?" "What does the shape of this cloud look like to you?" "Why does this cloud look like (for example) ice cream?" "What does a particular part of the cloud look like?" "How does it make you feel?" (Some see ice cream, birds, rockets, etc.) Encourage all possible ideas, even though the illustrations show a cloud constantly changing its shape in the sky.
Show slides of actual clouds; include slides taken at different times of the day, in different seasons, and during all kinds of weather.	Ask questions about the clouds: "What do these clouds look like to you?" "What kind of mood do you feel with this slide?" (dark, ominous looking clouds) "What weather changes do you think will happen?" "What do you do on this kind of a day?"
Continue with rest of slides.	

LESSON SCHEME (Continued)

INPUT	INTERACTION
	Encourage association of clouds with changes in weather, mood, etc. Note with children that clouds are not always white: "Why is this cloud orange (or pink, or gray)? "Why is the sky pink, or orange, or golden instead of blue?"

EXPERIENCE

Give each child a 9 x 12" sheet of colored construction paper (for sky) and another 9 x 12" sheet of colored construction paper (for the cloud).

Have children fold the sheet for the cloud in quarters or in half. Using scissors, each will cut along the edges (not the fold) in a random (anyway at all) fashion. Or they can cut along all edges and folds for many clouds.

Emphasis on random cutting pattern insures individuality of form.

Paste shape on paper. Children may make a design or a representational form.

Children can use crayons to detail the forms. For example, if the form appears to be a bird, the child colors eyes, feathers, beak, etc.

Encourage children to talk about their pictures.

- Gloria Alibani -

In the following presentation of "Clouds" a transcript of the actual dialogue taken from a cassette recording appears on the left side of the page. On the right side are the comments and pictures that are intended to familiarize the reader with the MOPPET process as it unfolds.

NOTE: Because of the difficulty of jumping back and forth that would be involved in reading two columns simultaneously, the reader will probably find it easier to skim through the lesson transcript first, and then examine the comments.

There are some gaps that occurred between tapes and some inaudible lines. Also, later, in the creative drama lesson, there have been some omissions to prevent the analysis from becoming overly long. Otherwise, the bulk of the dialogue and the general flow of the lessons are presented as they happened.

KINDERGARTEN ART LESSON "CLOUDS" - PART I

Transcript

Teacher: Well, what happened is that when we use glue with these brushes.....

Child: Then the little things get sticked together...

Teacher: That's right, and they get like concrete and the brush is like concrete, then it isn't a brush anymore, and it's not nice and soft. So we'll just have to soak it to get all that out.

Child: We'll have to wait. (teacher laughs) Remember when we were pretending we were clouds?

Teacher: When did you pretend you were clouds?

Child: When you were sick.

Classroom Teacher: They have Miss what's-her-name....Colville. They had clouds and shapes.

Teacher: Guess what?

Child: What?

Teacher: Guess what you're going to see today?

Child: What?

Teacher: You're going to see some clouds and you're going to do something else too! We're going to make some clouds.

Comments and Pictures

The lesson begins informally with the teacher explaining that when brushes dry with glue in them they get stiff. When the subject of clouds is mentioned the children relate it to a previous lesson in movement. At that point the teacher announces that the subject of this lesson will also be clouds.

Above, art teacher, Gloria Alibani, organizes class in an informal circle on the floor.

Teacher: Did you ever see, ohhh....on a really really, nice day, a nice bright sunny day; did you ever just ah....kind of lie back on the grass and look up at the sky and see all these big puffy clouds way up in the sky? When you see all those big puffy clouds, do they just look like clouds or do they look like other things?

Child: They do look like other things.

Teacher: Like what?

Child: Like a '3' and an 'E'.

Teacher: Like a '3' and an 'E'?

Child: I once saw, the night after Christmas, I saw eight little reindeer in the sky and there was a cloud with a sled on it!

Teacher: You did?

Child: Oh, I know two of them.

Teacher: Around Christmas time, that's amazing!

Child: What? Snow and rain... and tree tops.

Teacher: Oh...yes that can be really lovely on tree tops. What did you say?

Child: I said rain.

Teacher: Sure, sure,...clouds can change the sky especially when it rains.....

The teacher is now changing from the convergent to the divergent approach; i.e., she has stopped telling or pouring in and has begun suggesting, asking, and making accompanying comments to facilitate drawing out the responses and ideas of the children. This is where the dotted lines in our lesson process model branch outward, denoting that the teacher should stimulate the children to become conscious and give voice to their own private feelings and thoughts. This works best when the atmosphere is supportive and nonthreatening, where respect is shown for the children's responses.

It will be noted that there is a continual interplay between the teacher and the children, with no attempt being made by the teacher to dominate the dialogue. Yet, she is very obviously directing the course of the conversation.

This dialogue appears to have a certain randomness in that the range of subject matter continually grows. However, the new ideas are always related to the central focus on clouds, and new ideas are not allowed to change the direction of the lesson. Thus the growing body of subject matter is not really random at all, but rather it is growing in variety and richness. It is this growing in variety and richness that furnishes much of the dynamic force that ultimately

Teacher: When the rain starts coming out of the clouds.

Child: Sun.

Teacher: Sure, sure it can be changed, ... sure and sometimes when the clouds go over the sun it can.....it makes everything a little darker and sure the clouds could look like the sun.

Child: White paint?

Teacher: (Softly) Ahh...like somebody took a brush and wiped....

Child: White paint. Looks like somebody took a brush and washed....

Teacher: They painted it with a paint brush. Oh, that's terrific.

Child: And a cat.

Teacher: Yes, okay, you can see different animals...some of them.

Child: And a space suit.

Teacher: And a space suit, elephants.... okay. What I would like you to do is...um...just look at the screen... okay? I'm going to show you different pictures. The picture is going to be of a cloud that's going to try to

motivates children to express themselves creatively. Novelty triggers the individual imagination; whereas too much repetition of the familiar tends to dull it.

In the organization of the lesson plan for "Clouds," the present discussion is intended to serve as a warm-up for the slide presentation that will follow. The reader will note in accompanying pictures that the slides are not particularly spectacular in themselves. If they were shown at the beginning of the lesson before the children had a chance to build a pre-context of interest, it is likely that the value of the slide presentation would be lost.

At this point the teacher decides that the preliminary discussion is sufficiently developed to form a receptive climate for the introduction of the slides. She now abruptly changes back to the convergent teaching style: she takes command of the group and tells them what will happen next and what they should do.

Teacher: play tricks on you. And its not going to stay the same all the time. The shape is going to change....Alright, who remembers from Miss Colville's class how you change shapes? Were you clouds? Did you make believe you were clouds?

Child: Oh yeah, and we made believe we were rain and snow. (Group response)

Teacher: Ohh...okay, so you know you made believe you were different things and you changed your shapes. Look up here and I am going to ask you a lot of questions about what you think it looks like and maybe what parts of the clouds look like. Okay, and then afterwards we're going to make our own clouds. We'll make pictures of our own clouds. Okay?

Child: (inaudible) choking me.

Teacher: Oh! Can you get that Emma? We don't want that to happen. Okay, ah.... Okay, just make yourself comfortable and.... Here we have clouds with many certain kinds of shapes. Ah....does anybody know what this cloud looks like?

Child: Yeah....

Teacher: What could this cloud be? Let me see now....

Children: A tree top and....snow.

In the MOPPET process teachers must become conscious and deliberate in these shifts back and forth between the divergent and convergent teaching styles. There should be no value conflict concerning which style is best. Instead, there should be a consciousness of which style is most appropriate for the various parts of the lesson.

Above, the slide presentation begins. The teacher again moves back to the divergent approach when she asks for the children's reactions.

Teacher: Okay, great.

Child: It looks like a Christmas tree.

Teacher: Oh sure, it has a shape of a Christmas tree. That's great, anybody else have something?

Child: A tree.

Teacher: Why does it look like a tree?

Child: Because it's so fluffy.

Teacher: Yes, yes, fluffy. That's a nice word for it.

Child: Snow.

Teacher: Ohh, where did you see a pile of snow that looked like this cloud?

Child: All the snow in my backyard, it was up to my knees.

Teacher: It was? And did it look like this?

Child: I know one...Santa Claus.

Teacher Why does this cloud remind you of Santa Claus?

Child: Because he's got the white beard.

Teacher: Sure....doesn't Santa have a big white fluffy beard?

The reader will note that some of the reactions are very literal, especially when a slide is introduced. A child is not criticized for repeating the same obvious answer that was given by a classmate. Seemingly ridiculous answers are also accepted. The point is to get the flow of imaginative thought moving. As it turned out in this lesson, the children soon became aware that they were "pretending" or trying to see more than was actually in the slides.

As teachers, the bulk of our training and teaching experience is oriented toward the transmission of objective "known" information and skills. This is the basic content of the so-called pouring-in or traditional approach to teaching. MOPPET utilizes this approach whenever it is appropriate. However, we recognize that the creative experience virtually by definition deals with "unknowns"; i.e., the precise nature and quality of the experience is demonstrated by the individual child--not by the teacher. Thus, through structuring the lesson experience in such a way as to draw out the child, the teacher is not drawing out the child for his/her own edification, but rather to aid the child in becoming self-aware of his/her own reaction to the ongoing events of the lesson. Consequently, the art of skillfully drawing children out is the key to the MOPPET process.

Child: It has no nose, no eyes, no arms.....

Teacher: No, so if this looks like Santa Claus and you said there are no eyes, and no nose and no arms, we're using our WHAT?

Children: Imagination.

Teacher: Oh sure, but how did you know that word--how do you know that word imagination. That's a big word to know.

Child: We were pretending.

Teacher: Sure, you were pretending - that's very good. Okay, oh, you have another one?

Child: When me and my mother went out, there was snow up to...um, to my...um, the calves of my legs.

Teacher: Oh sure, the snow was very, very, high and there were big mounds of snow. Okay, what else?

Child: A kitty cat, it looks like a kitty cat.

Teacher: Why do you say that?

Child: My mother says it's fluffy. Some cats are fluffy.

Teacher: Did you ever see a big white fluffy cat?

Child: I saw one.

It is important that the teacher consciously work at developing this skill in order to facilitate the creative process. Visual and aural presentations, interesting activities, etc. are important tools in activating the process, but the ongoing teacher/student dialogue is the real key that will determine whether all the elements of the lesson will come together to result in a successful creative experience. Therefore, the rather extensive dialogue that the teacher engages in with the students for the remainder of this lesson is far from a waste of time--on the contrary, it is the heart of the lesson.

There is no set format for the teacher/student dialogue. Some teachers have a gift for improvising or for modifying their approach in response to the changing flow of the lesson. Others carefully plan their discussion. The crucial point to remember is not the manner in which the dialogue is conducted, but rather its effectiveness in drawing out the responses of the children.

For example, in order to facilitate the imaginative process, the teacher of the present lesson attributes the changing of the slides to the effect of the wind on the clouds. Soon she speaks as though she were the clouds, which further heightens the illusion. This kind of participation by the teacher is very helpful in transporting children out of the classroom and into the world of imagination.

Teacher: Or even a little baby one, that can look like this. Okay, but since this cloud is looking down on us and oh...Mrs. Geary's class...really can guess what I am, so I think I'll have to change.

Child: A bunny rabbit.

Teacher: And a big gust of wind came along, and what happens?

Child: A bunny rabbit?

Teacher: Why does this cloud look like a bunny rabbit?

Child: Cause he needs a bunny rabbit, a bunny rabbit.

Teacher: They made it a bunny rabbit? How does the cloud know to turn into a bunny rabbit?

Child: They move themselves around.

Teacher: Oh, it keeps moving around. Okay, okay, yes, and maybe it can push up one ear and push up another ear and gave himself a little cottontail sure enough he'll turn into a bunny rabbit. But he said oh, these people really are guessing what I am, and I tried to disguise myself and turn myself into a bunny rabbit and so I'm going to have to change again.....

Child: A bird.

In a lesson such as the present one where the INPUT presentation and the INTERACTION dialogue are conducted parallel or simultaneously, it is very important that the teacher be very familiar with the contents and order of the material presented. If the teacher lacks such familiarity with the material, he/she may well end up following the lesson instead of guiding it.

MOPPET lessons are intended to be memorable experiences, and when they are properly executed they have that effect. It frequently leads to disappointment when a teacher takes the time and effort required to organize a complex lesson, and then thoughtlessly neglects to become thoroughly familiar with the material and teaching sequences.

Teacher: Who knows what this looks like?

Child: A bird.

Teacher: Who has an idea?....Okay, why does it look like a bird?

Child: Because it has wings, it has wings and a tail.... An eagle.

Teacher: Sure, do you know why it looks like an eagle to you?

Child: Because of the beak and its big, that's the way it looks.

Teacher: Show me the beak and show me the wings on the eagle.

Child: The wings are there and the beak is there.

Teacher: Does it look like anything else?..Yes?

Child: There's the head.

Teacher: Okay, do you want to show me the head?

Child: (Child laughs) Did (inaudible)

Teacher: Okay, and can you find the tail? Okay, you find the tail on the bird cloud... Good. Can it be anything else besides a bird? Can it be anything else?

Child: I know. . . An airplane.

In the picture above it appears that some children are much more animated than others. One can never be certain in advance just how a given child will react to a MOPPET lesson. Part of this is due to the unknown element involved in the deliberate pursuit of creative experience. However, teachers will discover that certain children who normally respond poorly to the customary cognitive oriented classwork, will respond very wholeheartedly in MOPPET activities. In accounting for these cases, the teacher is invited to consider the fact that in addition to the uneven distribution of talents and abilities, we also must contend with a great variation in student predisposition. Some children who have a greater than usual need for creative expression are literally starved by the conventional curriculum.

Teacher: An airplane....yes.

Child: A duck, a kitty cat.

Teacher: A kitty cat? Why did you say a kitty cat?

Child: Because the ears could be so big. A piece of soap.... And I had some cats.

Teacher: Did you?

Child: Okay, I can see how it would look like that. And it could look like what?

Child: Soap.

Teacher: Soap! That's great. Why did you say soap?

Child: Cause it's white.

Teacher: Oh yes, I have some white soap at home. And sometimes, you know some people really can carve into soap... And they make all these different things.

Child: They usually make (inaudible)

Teacher: Right, it sounds like....Did you ever hear the word whittling, you could whittle something away and yeah, they make all nice designs. Okay, but this cloud says ooh, Mr. Wind, you have to help me because Mrs. Geary's class has guessed everything I turned into. So here comes a big gust of wind and.....

Such children recognize the opportunity for the much needed creative expression when it is presented to them. Therefore, teachers should be prepared for some unexpected responses from certain children when they are exposed to MOPPET lessons.

In the discussion of soap, the reader will notice that one child touched on the subject of carving to make things. The teacher of art was obviously tempted to pursue that direction in order to bring about a discussion of sculpture. However, she resisted the temptation and went on to the next slide.

Sometimes teachers get so involved in the freedom of the dialogue that they allow discussions of particularly attractive responses to go too far afield. Ultimately it is a matter of judgment concerning how much tangential discussion a teacher should allow. We do not frown on the practice, but we must remind the reader that MOPPET lessons are well structured and too many extended peripheral discussions can cause a lesson to lose its focus.

Children: Tree.

Teacher: Oh, okay, maybe it could be a tree. Can you think of anything else? Does anyone have another idea?

Child: Looks like a cloud on a tree. A cloud. A cloud. I see a .....

Teacher: Okay, okay, sure I see a cloud. And what did you say?

Child: I said a cloud.

Teacher: A cloud on a what? Is there anything else?

Child: I see sticks sticking out of the tree.

Teacher: I thought I heard you say a cloud on a tree? Are there some clouds on the tree when the tree's branches are up real high and the clouds go by? Then it looks like the clouds are on the tree.

Child: An apple tree, an orange tree.

Teacher: A what?

Child: Cherry tree, orange tree, an apple tree.....

Teacher: Oh, did you hear what she said?

Children: Yeah, and an ice cream cone.

Teacher: And an ice cream cone...oh, you're making me hungry. A what?

The INTERACTION dialogue in a MOPPET lesson may well involve considerable physical illustration in addition to words. In the picture above a little girl is pointing out something on the projection screen. This kind of activity is very effective and illustrates one of the many advantages of using a very large projection surface. The children can literally become part of the presentation, which heightens the motivational impact.

One of the advantages of a slide presentation, such as the one illustrated here, is that the teacher has complete control. The slides can be arranged as desired and during the presentation the speed of the changes are made in response to the rhythm of the lesson.

Child: A bone?

Teacher: Sure,.....Yes?

Child: Cherries?

Teacher: Okay.

Child: It's making me hungry too... A tree.

Teacher: Yes, it does look like a tree. Okay, this person's going to show me the parts of a tree. Go ahead, go up and show me the parts of a tree.

Child: There's the stem.

Teacher: A stem is the real small part of the flower. Do you know what it is called when it's on a tree?

Child: A trunk.

Teacher: A trunk, right. Okay, good, very good.....What is that down there?

Child: Dirt.

Teacher: What grows into the dirt and they all look like fingers growing into the ground?

Child: It's um....like, that grows on the ground like... it's a tree....

Teacher: Did you ever hear the word "roots?"

Considerable cognitive information can be injected into lessons if the teacher desires. In the present lesson the teacher has asked a child to point out and name the parts of a tree. This kind of exercise had only a small part in the present lesson; however, it is obvious that with a different selection of slides and a different orientation in the dialogue, this lesson could have been converted into a strictly cognitive vehicle. It is appropriate to point this out because the INTERACTION dialogue could not achieve its purpose of motivating a creative experience if all the slides were inappropriate or if the dialogue was always channeled by the teacher into a discussion of objective facts.

When a teacher intends to promote a creative experience it is necessary that he/she keep that objective clearly in mind so that the selection of materials will be appropriate. To deliberately combine a large content of factual information with a creative experience is a very sophisticated and desirable skill. One way this can be done will be illustrated later in the 7th grade social studies lesson.

Child: Yeah....roots.

Teacher: Okay, sure, does anybody have another idea?

Child: Yeah, a flower.

Teacher: Why sure, it could be a flower. Why did you say a flower?

Child: (inaudible)

Teacher: Oh sure, but now the March winds, you know this is March and windy. March is blowing with all its might. And turning the clouds around.

Children: (inaudible)

Teacher: Oh...okay, I see the thing. Beautiful cherries.

Child: Ice cream.

Teacher: Okay, somebody didn't have a turn. Who didn't have a turn? You didn't have a turn. Sal, what does it look like to you?

Sal: (inaudible)

Teacher: A what? Oh, you're Robert. Okay, Robert, alright I'll try to remember that. Does it look like anything else? Sal?...Do you have an idea?

Child: Flower, a tree.

The MOPPET teacher is having some trouble with the names because she does not see this class very often. However, it is obvious that she is making a conscientious effort to reach every child and draw him/her into the discussion.

Actually, it is not necessary for every child to

Teacher: Flower, another kind of a tree, sure. Jeff?

Child: Um....a tree. I think I know.

Teacher: You think you know?

Child: I know, it's an ice cream cone.

Teacher: Think it's an ice cream cone?

Child: It is. It is. It looks like one.

Teacher: No, sure, it's a different shape. But speaking of shapes....

Child: A flower.

Teacher: Okay, can you raise your hand so I can understand all your good ideas? Let's see, okay, how about you?

Child: Ice cream cone?

Teacher: Okay, alright, another ice...oh... Yes, what's it look like to you?

Child: I know what it looks like.

Teacher: You didn't have a turn?

Child: A wrench.

Teacher: A what? A wrench? Wow, that's a new one, I didn't hear that before.

give voice to his/her reactions; it is quite possible for a child to have interesting responses that he/she does not wish to discuss. If the atmosphere of the class is encouraging and permissive, the child will be aware of it and will not be retarded from creative expression just because he/she did not say something out loud. Nevertheless, the reader should be conscious of how easy it is to fall into the pattern wherein the INTERACTION dialogue is carried on almost exclusively with the four or five cleverest or most outspoken members of the class. In such cases the high calibre of the participating children frequently favors the development of a very satisfactory dialogue--so much so that the teacher often is unaware that the student discourse is being carried on by a small minority of the class. In such a situation the less outspoken children quickly become aware that the teacher is showing no interest in their ideas. To avoid falling into this narrow discussion pattern, we suggest that the teacher make a conscious effort to reach as many students as possible. Also, the teacher should be particularly sensitive to those children who tend to drift easily into the background or to allow themselves to be overshadowed by their more animated classmates.

We have given considerable attention to the importance of the INTERACTION dialogue in promoting creative functioning. However, it has yet another important function that could be summed up in this idea: every MOPPET lesson is a language arts lesson.

Child: An indian.

Teacher: Why do you think it looks like an indian? Let's listen, let's listen and hear everybody's ideas. Okay.

Child: Cause it looks like it got all feathers on it.

Teacher: Where are the feathers?

Child: All across the top.

Teacher: Right. Okay, do you have anything up here that can be the feathers? Okay, what?

Child: It has leaves.

Teacher: Where are the leaves? Do you see any leaves?

Child: Yeah, yeah, I do too.

Teacher: Very good, (inaudible) . That's wonderful. Does anybody have another idea besides the flowers.

Child: Wings.

Teacher: If you see wings here, what could it be?

Child: A bird.

Teacher: You think it's a bird. Show me the wings.

Child: Right.....here.

Experts in reading and writing skills are pretty much agreed that student progress in those skills must be preceded by the development of the ability to handle the language in thought and speech. When considered from this point of view, the teacher may logically infer that MOPPET lessons will have a beneficial influence on the whole spectrum of language arts skills. The MOPPET evaluations have shown that the lessons do in fact result in better language arts skills, particularly in the lower grades.

This realization leads to another justification for the desirability of conducting the INTERACTION dialogue in a very supportive atmosphere. Children will not venture or take chances with words and expressions they are not sure of unless they feel safe in doing so. Some of the short answers the reader has noted in the present lesson may very well have been offered by children who did not yet care to offer a more daring idea. This is also likely to be the case in regard to those children who repeat answers that have already been given by other children. One cannot blame children for this tendency to play safe in a culture that tends to penalize us for wrong or inappropriate responses. It seems worthwhile for the teacher to make clear to children that they will <u>not always</u> be criticized for poor answers. In fact, in MOPPET lessons the <u>quality of the attempt</u>

Teacher: Oh, that's good, that's very good. Okay, but....Pete says, what did Pete say again.....

Child: Wind, help me. That's what I say.

Teacher: He says what?

Child: Wind, help me.

Teacher: Pete says, wind help me, help me to do what?

Child: Make me change into another flower.

Teacher: Okay, let's see how the wind helped him.

Children: (inaudible)

Teacher: Oh, well, this is a pretty easy one. Yeah, he really kind of looks like a pig. Why do you think he would turn himself into a pig?

Child: Because he has a tail. Because he has uh... feet and a nose.

Teacher: He has feet and he has a nose. Who hasn't had a turn? You haven't had a turn. Okay, could you show me the pig's ear and his tail and his nose? Wait, I called on this boy over here. Let's give him a chance, okay. And what is that?

should be recognized as being just as praiseworthy as is success itself. The fear of failure must be removed in order to receive the children's best efforts. This is not poor pedagogy if the children are made aware of the fact that when they are dealing with the unfamiliarity of new ideas, etc. they are not bound by the same rules for correctness that are usually the practice.

If this kind of understanding is conveyed successfully to the children, they will be free of the restraint of excessive anxiety. In this kind of atmosphere, as their imaginations make new demands, their limited language skills will naturally be taxed and consequently expand.

Child: The tail.

Teacher: Okay, anything else?

Child: Yeah, his nose.

Teacher: Who sees something else? Do you see something else? Okay, show me, show me the shape of his nose. Show me his ear. Okay, all the way over there, okay. Who didn't have a turn to get up yet?

Child: I didn't go yet.

Teacher: Okay, go ahead. What's that?

Child: His legs.

Teacher: Okay, well, this cloud said,... what did he say again, what did your cloud say?

Child: Help me.

Teacher: Help me, Lynn? Help me to do what?

Children: Turn into another flower.

Teacher: Turn into another....ah, I guess nobody was with me.

Children: (inaudible)

Teacher: Okay, what does it look like? Let's get some different ideas? Let me

The reader has probably noticed that on the previous page one child took over from the teacher and also became a cloud who wanted the wind to change him/her from time to time. On the present page, the teacher returned to that device again when it came time for a slide change, but this time it didn't work out too successfully because the new slide in no way resembled a flower.

Some teachers worry too much about the success of these spontaneous strategies. The fact is that the INPUT and INTERACTION, such as those described in this lesson, should have a strong element of drama. And, like drama, the course of events requires a certain amount of failure in order to facilitate a proper appreciation of the finer moments. Therefore, the teacher should not worry about the success or failure of this or that stratagem. Also, the teacher should be able to distinguish between these small failures and larger failure of an entire lesson. If one has a good basic understanding of the lesson, small unexpected responses in the course of teaching will probably humanize and add to the lesson's effectiveness.

Teacher: see some hands. Let me see, I can't find anyone who didn't have a turn.

Child: I didn't go yet.

Teacher: How about Robert?...Robert, what does it look like to you?

Robert: Ostrich.

Teacher: An ostrich. Why do you say an ostrich? That's a good one. Why?

Child: I didn't get a chance to say that before.

Teacher: Do you have a reason why?

Child: I think I know.

Teacher: Does it look like an ostrich?

Children: No.....no.....no.

Teacher: Oh, how can you see? Who um... who's the person in the green smock?

Child: Sal.

Teacher: No, that's not Sal.

Child: Paul.

Teacher: Paul, Paul, what do you see Paul? Can you see a little (inaudible). I think that's better. Okay, alright,

It appears that as the lesson progresses the responses are becoming more and more imaginative. When the slide presentation began we had a lot of commonplace, familiar responses such as trees, snow, kittens, birds, etc. As time goes on less common things enter such as wrenches, indians, ostriches, volcanoes, pelicans, etc. Obviously, many of the children are gradually moving from the more obvious answers and are consciously searching for less obvious and, perhaps, more whimsical possibilities.

This progression does not happen automatically. The teacher brings it about through her reaction to the various responses. She is by no means negative to the obvious or commonplace answers, but she shows greater interest in the more unusual constructions. Thus, without resorting to comparisons she directs

Teacher:	what else can you see besides a birthday cake and an ostrich? Who else has an idea? Okay.
Child:	A candle.
Teacher:	Okay, we see a candle.
Child:	I see the body of it.
Teacher:	You see the body of it? Where do you find the body? What is that?
Child:	A body from the birthday cake. I see the body, there's the candle.
Teacher:	Can't it be anything else other than a birthday cake?
Child:	A volcano.
Teacher:	A what?
Children:	A volcano.
Teacher:	A volcano, right, terrific. You all have such good ideas. How can I keep track of all these ideas?
Child:	A boat.
Teacher:	Okay, what do you say? Okay, why do you say a boat?
Child:	It looks like a shape of a boat. .... I see candles.
Teacher:	Someone gave us candles before.

the interest of the children in the direction of the more challenging ideas.

It is a mistake to suppose that a teacher can arbitrarily decide that a given length of time devoted to the INTERACTION discussion will automatically insure that the children will emerge from the experience with a better vocabulary of ideas than the one with which they started. This progression to better ideas is a process that is deliberately brought about by the teacher. It is done through constantly refining the feedback from the children and then through his/her own responses, gradually, directing the course of the discussion up to a higher level.

Needless to say, this cannot be done successfully if the teacher does not have a pretty clear idea of where he/she wants the children to go. Also, it should be plain that "teaching off the top of the head" is not appropriate here. Despite the freedom that is necessary to teach this kind of lesson, it is vitally important that the teacher direct the flow. To draw an analogy, the children should be free to interrupt the voyage to investigate this or that island, but the teacher is the helmsman who makes sure that all arrive eventually at the proper port. It should in this case be better than the one they left.

Teacher: Robert, can you tell me something else?

Robert: It looks like um....a pelican.

Teacher: A what? A pelican? My goodness, okay, but.... the cloud is changing again.

Child: A sheep.

Teacher: Yes, he turned into a sheep.

Child: Baa....Baa....

Teacher: Yes, okay and with the wind, maybe the wind can help him make the sound, or does it sound like a sheep.

Children: Baa....Baa....Baa....

Teacher: Oh, he says, Mrs. Geary's class really knows what I am so I am going to change again.

Children: A bird, it's a bird or a plane (laughter) or underdog.

Teacher: Underdog? (teacher laughs)

Child: Underdog....Bugs Bunny.

Teacher: Okay, it looks like Bugs Bunny, it looks like a bird. Does it look like anything else?

Child: A pigeon.

Teacher: A what?

Child: A pigeon.

Teacher: A pigeon!

It should be pointed out that the "higher level" referred to is not necessarily always a more complex intellectual level. For example, many primary grade classes are reluctant to express themselves. In such cases an increase in volubility would constitute an improvement to be aimed for. Our concern over conscious planning and carrying out of the INTERACTION dialogue is conditioned by the knowledge that improvements are normally deliberately brought about. They seldom just happen. Without conscious direction the INTERACTION discussion can easily amount to just a "fun talk."

Child: That's what he is.....a pigeon.

Teacher: And if we change him again?

Child: A glove.

Teacher: Oh, a mitt or a glove, can he be something else?

Child: I didn't get a chance to talk.

Teacher: Okay, you get a chance.

Child: A bad boy shaking hands.

Teacher: What was that?

Children: (inaudible chorus)

Teacher: Sure, (inaudible)

Child: A boy shaking hands.

Teacher: Oh, yes, people shaking hands. Okay, good, but it's going to change. Yes.

Children: A squirrel....a squirrel.

Teacher: Look very closely at its big bushy tail.

Child: How long's the tail?

Teacher: Sure, it was a big bushy tail. Oh yes, (inaudible)....You can see his feet and his tail so we're going to change again....

Children: A bird!

Teacher: A bird.

It is generally accepted that the attention span for kindergarten children is about fifteen minutes. A MOPPET lesson cannot be done properly in such a short time. However, it can be seen that by moving from one slide or episode to another the rather lengthy INPUT and INTERACTION activities never suffer from lack of attention.

Child: An eagle, a bird!

Teacher: Oh, let me see....

Child: A volcano.

Teacher: What do you think Robert?

Child: I see a plane.

Teacher: Sure, can somebody else think of what else it is beside a bird or a plane or an eagle? Besides them....

Child: A volcano, an eagle.

Teacher: Can somebody else think of what it is besides a bird, a plane or an eagle. Besides those?

Child: A helicopter...airplahe.

Teacher: You think it's a helicopter, an airplane?

Child: My brother has a book with pictures of big airplanes, bigger than this one.

Teacher: Really! This is a pretty big one.

Child: I'm going to bring it to school.

Teacher: Okay, I'd love to see it. But we have clouds and it's changing again. Can I raise my hand and tell you what it looks like to me?

Children: Yes, ...yes.

Teacher: I really love popcorn and everytime I see this

In this age of T-V it is sometimes difficult to avoid underestimating the extent of young children's vocabularies. This is complicated somewhat by the fact that they don't all know the same things. A lesson such as this one provides a natural way to draw out the diversity of words that the children know and to give them a chance to use them.

Teacher: it reminds me of a huge piece of popcorn, like a giant piece of popcorn.

Children: Take some popcorn...I love popcorn. (All speaking excitedly at once)

Teacher: Wait a minute, oh....my goodness, wait a minute, I don't mind if you go up there but if you go up there too fast somebody is going to get hurt.

Child: Miss Alibani, speaking of popcorn, I'm having some tonight.

Teacher: You are?

Child: Me too! It looks like potato chips, pop, pop, pop.

Teacher: Okay, I think our popcorn is all eaten up by now, so let's go back and let's sit down.... boys.

Child: It looks like popcorn, it's popcorn.

Teacher: Robert, Paul and John. Okay, what? Sometimes, clouds can change colors. What colors do you see? Raise you hand. What colors do you see?

Children: Orange.....black.....gold.

Teacher: I can't understand if you all talk at once. Boys....sit....raise your hand and I'll call on you. Okay, let me see, Sal back there, what colors do you see? What kind of colors, look at the sun, look at the clouds, Sal. What colors do you see? Do you see any

The teacher has apparently decided to take a turn herself and tell the children what a particular slide reminds her of. It will be noted that the children become very excited over the idea of popcorn. There is also something of a rush to the screen.

This sort of action by the teacher should be indulged in with discretion. The fact that the children react with great enthusiasm might persuade the teacher that he/she has found the best way of conducting such a lesson. However, the truth is that the MOPPET approach to INTERACTION is basically a means of making demands upon the intellect and the imaginative powers of the children. In such circumstances it is to be expected that they will be on the lookout for an easier way. Children are naturally interested in what the teacher thinks, but they also especially welcome instances where the teacher relieves them of the work and at the same time gives them an answer that they can be wholeheartedly sure of.

You will observe that the teacher in our lesson had a bit of trouble bringing the class back to work. Obviously if she had pursued the "crowd pleasing" tactic the lesson could have been lost. In this case, however, the teacher changed the focus from objects and things to colors,and interest was reestablished.

Teacher: bright colors? Somebody see some bright colors? Okay. Sal's in a strange place today. He was in the morning class and was just changed. He doesn't know the children yet.

Child: I see a red.

Teacher: You see a red? Show me a red.

Child: Orange....black.

Teacher: That's very good....and you show me the black cloud. Listen, I'm not going to call on you, I just want you to watch the next couple of slides, alright, and just watch the colors because we're going to be making clouds. And I just want you to watch the colors, because some of them are going to be white and some of them are going to be very colorful....Now watch the sky here. What colors are the clouds in the sky?

Children: White.....blue....

Teacher: Right! White....and....blue, but in a little while the clouds change colors. Why was the sky so blue and clouds so white? Why did the clouds turn yellow? Who knows? Who thinks they know? Okay.

Child: God makes it change.

Teacher: What? Someone is talking. Okay let's listen. Okay.

Child: I see yellow and green.

Teacher: Okay, but why does it turn that way?

Child: Because it's dark on the other side of the world.

Teacher: Really!

Children: Purple.....purple....

Teacher: Why do you think they did that?

Child: Because I think it's getting closer to the dark side....I think it's going to the light side.

Teacher: You think it's getting lighter and you think it's getting darker, what do you think?

Child: Darker....I say darker.

Teacher: Oh, okay, be careful, oh my goodness. Listen to what's-her-name.

Child: Dana....Dana.

Teacher: Dana? Listen to her idea. Say it nice and loud.

Dana: I think the cloud has a door so we can go in.

Teacher: Ah, a cloud had a door in it, can that be true? Let's see some other colors the clouds turn into.

Children: Orange....yellow....purple.

Teacher: Sure, like the rainbow colors. Ah, some nice yellows and oranges. Let's see if you

Classes differ considerably. This probably has more to do with their experience at a given time than with their potential. Sometimes when a class is initially exposed to MOPPET lessons, they will not respond very well. We infer that they need a more extensive INPUT to stimulate their interest. Inevitably we have found that during the course of several lessons these classes steadily improve in interest and imaginative expression.

With the present class it is obvious that they are already at a stage where they are capable of making interesting imaginative statements. For example, "it's dark on the other side of the world," "I think it's going to the light side," "I think the cloud has a door in it so we can go in." These examples are the evidence that the teacher uses to determine that the class has reached the level where they have something to express. At this point the teacher starts to describe how they will make their own clouds. On the next page, as an illustration, she shows a slide of a cloud made by a previous class. She ties in the previous activities by asking for opinions on what the students made clouds represent.

Teacher: have any more there. Okay, think of what we're going to be doing. I'm going to give you some paper and we're going to be making our own clouds. This is a cloud that one boy made, and do you think this is a very nice cloud or a mean cloud?

Children: Mean cloud.

Teacher: Why do you say it's a mean cloud?

Children: Mean....it looks like a burglar.

Teacher: Oh, this is a burglar?

Child: He looks like he got teeth.

Teacher: He certainly does have teeth. How about this cloud...it's a big orange cloud. What is the orange cloud doing.

Child: Two men talking.

Teacher: Yes, two men talking, two birds, okay.... I think we can stop here....

Part II of "Clouds" may be done immediately after the INPUT and INTERACTION sections are concluded, or it may be postponed for as much as a week. In the latter case, the children need little prompting to recall what happened in Part I. This ease of recall of MOPPET lessons is one of the unusual features of the process. The impact of the visual INPUT undoubtedly has much to do with aiding retention, but we feel that the enthusiasm generated by the process as well as the element of personal meaning also promotes effortless remembering. We have found, incidently, that classes are able to describe previous lessons in their entirety as much as two years afterward.

KINDERGARTEN ART LESSON "CLOUDS" PART II

Transcript

Child: Nobody can see here....move out.

Teacher: Oh, if you sit in a tiny circle you won't be able to see. Just move out just a little bit.

Children: I can't see....I can't see...I'll stand up.

Teacher: Good idea. Alright, I'm going to choose one piece of paper. I'm going to have a green cloud in a yellow sky. How about a yellow cloud in a green sky? I think I'll have the yellow cloud in the green sky. If I take my paper and just fold it in half and I don't need any kind of scissors.... if I just use my hands to tear....

Child: Then it'll look like one....

Teacher: The paper starts to look like a cloud.... and if I go round and round and up and down....(demonstrating)....and if I open it up....whoops....

Child: Clouds!

Teacher: Wow! What do my clouds look like?

Children: Looks like an indian head....To me it looks like a...a...a flower.

Comments & Pictures

Part II of "Clouds" involves the EXPERIENCE that was referred to earlier in the MOPPET lesson model. In this part of the lesson the children will be given the opportunity to express themselves in art.

The teacher opens this lesson using the traditional convergent teaching style. She is giving directions on how to use the art materials. She demonstrates the steps the children will go through in making their own clouds. The reader may have noticed that the children are now wearing smocks so they won't mess up their clothes.

Teacher: Yes, it could be....but now watch this. If I take this and I turn it upside down, then it's a....

Child: Butterfly, butterfly....butterfly.

Teacher: Okay, sure, okay. What if I decide once I decide what I want my cloud to be and if I turn it this way, this looks like some kind of an animal. See the big horns. I would take my crayons and I would choose a color, alright? And first of all I would take my glue and I would just....watch me now....

Child: Stick it onto the green paper....

Teacher: Alright, I'll just take my crayon and make eyes,....nose....and I would make a big mouth. And I would show that it's some kind of a mask or some kind of a face. What did I forget? I forgot to put hair. Okay, I think maybe I can color that in later....and eyebrows. Okay, what I want you to do is: I am going to put down some cardboard. Pick a color for your cloud and pick a color for your sky. Alright, and we'll have crayons and you can make your cloud be what ever you want it to be.

Child: I want a blue sky.

Teacher: Okay, let's get this done first. Maybe.... uh....

Child: I'm going to stay with Kim. I'm gonna help.... I'm staying with Kim.

This part of the lesson could be done very conveniently on the desks in a regular classroom. However, from the standpoint of atmosphere, there is some advantage in going through the inconvenience of putting down some kind of cardboard or plastic covering over the rug so that the MOPPET room can be used.

The materials used in the EXPERIENCE are listed in the lesson plan. One should make sure that there is plenty of variety in the colors of the paper, crayons, etc.

Teacher: Robert, take that one and maybe Chris can sit down there.

Child: Come on Robert, and....

Teacher: Maybe I'll take one more. Alright, boys take one from here.

Child: I always sit with you.

Teacher: Okay, here's a red one...watch out!

Children: I'm not going to play with you....I'm not going to walk home with you....You sit down... Robert will sit next to you and I'll sit here. Oh great, glue!

Teacher: Okay, you have glue (inaudible)

Children: Robert.... One for every table.

Teacher: How about a few more over there.

Child: Sal needs one.

Teacher: Oh, wait a minute. That glue was for these people over here.

Child: Yeah, but there's one extra missin'. Yeah, cause Sal wasn't here.

Teacher: I've got some more.

Child: Here Sal. We need one more.

Teacher: Okay, Paul, over there. There's more room over there.

The teacher continues in the convergent mode until the class is organized so that each child has a proper work space, adequate materials and the knowledge of how to use them. Then for the remainder of the lesson she moves alternately in and out of the divergent and convergent styles. It would probably be easier to think of it as a mixed or modified style: i.e., she gives directions here, offers encouragement there, asks a question, shows appreciation, and generally supports the children on an individual basis according to their needs.

At no time does she tell a child what to make. Quite the contrary, she has encouraged diversity of ideas all through the INPUT and INTERACTION of Part I, and she now continues encouraging the pursuit of the individual statement throughout the EXPERIENCE in Part II.

Children: Now we don't need no more. Yes, Paul needs one.

Teacher: And one for who?

Children: (Chorus) Paul.

Teacher: One for Paul. Okay, and let's see, why don't you put a box of crayons down on each cardboard. Okay.....now we'll put some paper down.

Children: All colors....we need....I want blue... and give me white. We don't got any red.

Teacher: Here's red.

Child: Where's red?

Teacher: You can choose your colors.

Children: Where's red?.... I want green.... (all chattering)

Teacher: I think there's enough there for everybody.

Child: Wait, pick one piece at a time.

Teacher: Okay, choose a color for your sky and choose a color for your cloud.

Children: I got yellow....I got orange.... I need some white....red....purple there.

Teacher: There's a lot of yellow here.
(Much unorganized chatter as they work)

Child: Wow, there's a lot of colors here.

The reader will note that there is a lot of chatter among the children. This is natural in such a work situation, and, if the acoustics of the room are halfway decent, such conversation should not be in the least disturbing. The teacher now moves from group to group and from child to child giving help where it appears needed. After the introductory instructions there is rarely much group instruction in the EXPERIENCE part of the art lesson.

Children work at different speeds and in different ways. Some set to work quickly and may finish more than one picture in the course of a period. Others watch what their classmates are doing, or they may sit and look at the materials for a long time before deciding on what to do. Then, of course, there are usually a few children who find it very difficult to get started at all and they may need considerable help from the teacher.

Teacher: All you need are two colors....one for your cloud and one for your sky.

Child: I'm going to have a black cloud in a pink sky.

Teacher: All you need are two colors....one for your cloud and one for your sky.

Child: I can't make a cloud.

Teacher: Oh, sure you can!

Children: I'm gonna make a blue cloud. It looks like a building to me.

Teacher: That's great. That's a big building. What color is your sky going to be?

Child: Blue.

Teacher: Okay, what color do you think is going to be your cloud?....This color?

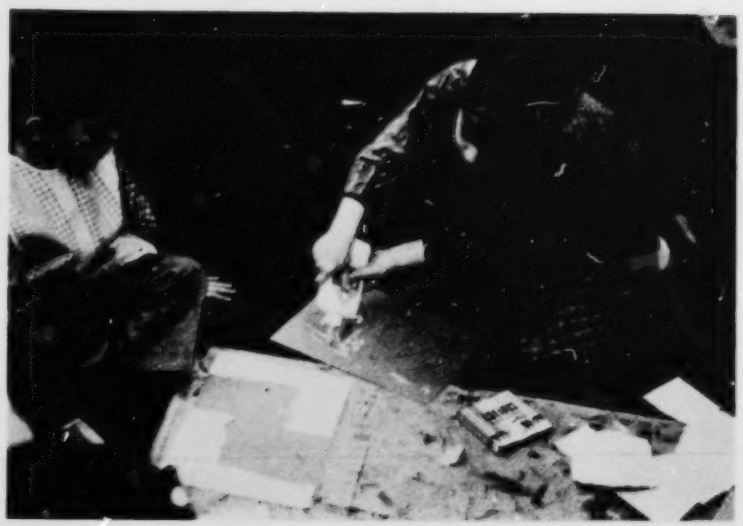
Child: This color is (inaudible).

Teacher: Hey, that's great....okay.

Child: Can there be any (inaudible)...

Teacher: Your feet are going to come popping out. They won't stick to the paper. What do you have? Hold your paper and fold your paper.

Some children set to work immediately.....



Teacher: Oh....that's lovely. The only thing you have to do is tear some of that paper off there. Don't be afraid to tear.

Child: But there's really nothing to do now.

Teacher: Now you see where this is open....

Children: Miss Alibani, could you..... That's Elmer's glue I'm using now. Look what I made!

Teacher: Ooh,... now that's a very, very good shape.

Child: How do you like my...um....ah... plane?

Teacher: Wow! That's really good.

Child: I'm making all sorts of things with my blue paper.....it looks to me like um...

Teacher: Oh, that's good, there are two shades there and....

Child: Hey, what's that?

Teacher: That's a good one.

Child: Oh, look what I found out working....

Teacher: What does that look like?

Child: Miss Alibani, I made a, a, a, a..... Can Mary do something like that?

Above the teacher gives some help to the boy in the flowered smock. The boy in a checkered shirt is obviously an interested listener. Below, the teacher moves to another group, and the two boys set to work.

Teacher: That's terrific, that's a great shape.

Children: How do you like mine? I can make two shoes out of this.

Teacher: Ah...(laughter)....two shoes. Great!

Child: Miss Alibani...(inaudible)

Teacher: Oh, wow, oh boy, these are very nice. Let me see your other clouds. Look at this terrific face. Oh, big happy face. Ooh.

Child: Miss Alibani, here's my two happy faces.

Teacher: That's just fabulous.

Child: Two mountains with a tower on it.

Teacher: That's wonderful! We have clouds that are turning into Santa, into shoes, mountains, faces.....

Child: I just got new crayons.

Teacher: Put the paper on the fireplace. Ah, let's see, put the crayons on the shelf there. That's a great shape, really good. If you want to do another one you can do another one.

Child: It looks like magic.

Teacher: Yes, yes, it does look like magic. Oh, this is a lovely smock. (hah, hah)

The intensity of the activity can be seen in the progress of this boy, who apparently now knows exactly what he wants to do.

Teacher: I need one. (laugh) On me it would look like a bib. Do you want to do another one... Okay. If you want to make two, you can make two.

Child: Miss Alibani, can you help me make it where the flower is?

Teacher: Oh, let me see, how do you think this flower should look?

Child: Miss Alibani, I need crayons.

Teacher: I guess I have them there.

Child: No, there's none there.

Teacher: No? Okay, could you share with someone?

Child: Okay, I'll share mine with Sal.

Teacher: Joseph, what do you want....What do you want there....Joe? Okay, you want crayons? Can you share, we have a lot of boxes. So would you share with ...who is it....a...Robert.

Child: No, Joseph.

Teacher: Joseph, okay.

Children: Children sitting next to me. No, Sal will do it. No, Joey. Joe's sitting next to me.

Teacher: It looks like a bumble bee. Oh, be careful, we don't want anything all over this floor.

Literally, of course, clouds look like clouds, and, when we keep our imagination in neutral, they continue to look like clouds no matter how long we look at them. However, the history of art (and of the other arts too) is full of examples testifying to the fact that artists have always found clouds stimulating to their creative imaginations. Obviously the idea of the infinite possibilities we can read into clouds has served as an admirable stimulus for this class.

Judging from the conversation, it appears that the flow of ideas that were activated in the INPUT and INTERACTION continues through the EXPERIENCE. One will note that the ideas developed in the original dialogue (flowers, birds, trees, volcanoes, airplanes, etc.) have mostly disappeared to be replaced by mountains, bumble bees, dentists, cars, etc. that were not discussed previously.

The reader may be troubled by the fact that this lesson never tells the teacher precisely what to teach. The objectives in the lesson plans deal with concepts to be taught. Specific, well defined content leading to "how to make a cloud" are absent. This contrasts to the traditional concept wherein content and skills are normally the prime consideration, so much so, in fact, that concepts frequently become subsidiary to the facts and skills surrounding them. In MOPPET, on the other hand, we never try to form a consensus on content. We believe the ultimate content is the individual statement each child produces. The role of the teacher is to structure and guide the lesson in such a

Teacher: Oh, what is the person doing on the wall.

Child: Working on the (inaudible).

Teacher: That's great.

Children: I'm working on my second part. I want glue.

Teacher: Here it is.

Child: Who has it?

Teacher: That's beautiful, that's beautiful!

Child: Look at my lamb, look at my lamb! And a man brushing his teeth!

Teacher: Oh, wow.....oh, he's terrific. My goodness, look at this big smile.

Children: I need a red piece and a yellow piece of paper. The last time I was here mine was big too. Why didn't you work with the tissue paper?

Teacher: Wow, wow, I remember that. That's fantastic!

Child: What is it Rob?

Rob: A gigantic cloud.

Child: The whole world. This might be all the clouds in the world.

Teacher: You know it just might be. Okay, keep it on the cardboard so we don't spill any

way that the individual children are afforded an opportunity to make individual statements of their own invention.

Art has little or nothing to do with efficiency in the usual "group thought" sense, epitomized by the assembly line and the computer. Quite the contrary, art is the natural vehicle of individual expression. However, unlike our more common means of expression such as speech and gesture, art has greater depth and speaks in dimensions where everyday speech and gesture cannot follow.

For teachers this implies that a distinction must be made between skills, concepts, etc., which can be taught, and the distinct, individual essence of art, which cannot be taught. This is why Picasso, when asked how to teach children to draw, answered that one should not teach children to draw; instead one should learn from them. Great technician that he was, certainly Picasso thoroughly understood the role of technique in art. But he was trying to point out that the highest value of art is the individual expression, and that we should not interfere with the natural artist in the child. He was undoubtedly aware that in art this individuality can be buried under a deluge of well intentioned "instruction" and thus be lost forever.

Teacher: glue on the rug. Alright?

Child: Know what Miss Alibani, know what Miss Alibani, my cloud has cavities.

Teacher: (Laughing) Oh my goodness, her cloud has cavities. Where would a cloud go to the dentist, I wonder?

Child: To a cloud dentist.

Teacher: Are you finished with your picture?

Child: No.

Teacher: To a cloud dentist. Oh, that's very, very good. I see you did stems for the flowers.

Child: Gregory, put the red back.

Teacher: Oh, it looks like there are twin clouds here. Very nice....okay, start adding your last shape on your picture. Okay, if you're finished..... Okay, start adding your last piece onto your picture, okay. Start adding your last piece onto your picture.

Child: Oh, why did you put some glue on that?

Teacher: Oh, I'm sorry. I've never seen such interesting clouds. Oh.... if you were a cloud, what color would you be?

Child: White.....orange.

The best rule to follow, therefore, is to teach only the essential concepts and techniques, and to convey clearly that these are to be used as means through which the individual child can "make his/her own." A lesson almost always needs a theme, such as "Clouds." However, inside that theme the child should be motivated through the INPUT and INTERACTION to freely choose his/her own specific subject. The variety--or lack of variety--in the resulting products will tell the teacher whether he/she succeeded or failed in bringing this about.

In the arts, teachers are chronically bothered by the idea of quality. They apparently hold themselves responsible for the quality of their students' work, and for this reason they become too helpful, too specific, in short, they overteach in an effort to make sure that a decent product is turned out. This practice runs counter to Picasso's advice. If the teacher can exercise discipline in going no further than the structuring of the lesson demands, the children will then find it necessary to do the mental work of creativity themselves. Thus, through continually giving their best efforts, the best product they are capable of will result. Therefore, it is perfectly logical and reasonable to ask the teacher to develop judgment in knowing when to get out of the way and let it happen.

Teacher: White?....And why would you be a white cloud? Put the paper back in there. Put it back the way it was....and why would you be an orange cloud?

Child: (Inaudible)

Teacher: Sure it is. Okay, let's put it on the cardboard. Do you want it back there? Okay, this is going to be white and we'll need some glue here to stick that down. That bottom part is fine. Just put it all the way over there so it'll hold it right down there. That's very nice.

Child: Now I need one red and yellow paper.

Teacher: That's very nice.

Child: My...oops....glue fell.

Teacher: Okay, find yourself another cardboard, Jeff and you can....(inaudible.) When you're finished put your name on your paper so you know it belongs to you, alright?

Child: Put this away.

Teacher: Oh no, not with the glue, with the crayons.

Child: It would be good to put your name with the glue and then it would be in glue.

Teacher: (Laugh) I know. No, then it'll stick on everything else. Okay, that's a really terrific man there.

Child: I'm going to make mine in glue.

What kind of help does he need? Or does he need any?

Teacher: This might be very, very nice for Mother's Day. It's a team of clouds, that's what it is.

Child: A team of clouds?

Teacher: When you're finished, take your cloud picture with you....That is very, very good.... You found a design where you cut the flowers and that's very important, you just made a very important discovery.

Child: It sticks to my finger.

Teacher: (Laughs)

Child: Miss Alibani, can we make a butterfly picture?

Teacher: Okay, that'll be fine but it'll have to be the last.

Child: Miss Alibani, I wrote my brother's name on mine.

Teacher: You wrote your brother's name on there?

Child: I put my name on it and I'm going to put my brother's on it.

Teacher: Why would you put your brother's name on it? You're the artist....do you have your name on there?

Children: Do whatever you wanna.....My name is Willy. I'm gonna make my brother's name Willy.

Teacher: Are all your names on these?

Children: Yes....No....I'm not done.

Our basic belief is that a teacher who is not willing to trust children does not really believe in them. Thus "overteaching" to make sure that children produce a good product is a reflection of the teacher's lack of faith in them, rather than a true estimate of children's abilities. Admittedly, it is a gamble when we trust children to go ahead and produce something worthwhile when we have not provided them with a precise definition of just what it is that they are expected to produce. And it is true that some children will sometimes produce little or nothing in permissive circumstances. Yet if we deny them this right to fail, we also deny them the freedom to grow into responsible, self-directing individuals. After all, the fundamental law of learning is that we must develop the ability to cope constructively with our multitudinous failures.

Therefore, when introducing MOPPET lessons, teachers should not be upset if a few of the children do poorly, for this will frequently happen, especially in the early lessons. We should acknowledge that the poor effort is the best that these children can or will produce at that time. Invariably we have found that this condition does not last; soon these children become infected with the enthusiasm of the class and their work improves.

Teacher: We can't stay now because other people are coming in....Oh, my goodness, that's just wonderful.

Child: I thought of my own idea.

Teacher: I think it's a very good idea....Okay, why don't....you're the artist.... you should follow through.

Child: (Inaudible)

Teacher: That's a very good idea.... Okay, what's that look like?

Children: It looks like a car and people's heads. I'll cover my brother's name.

Teacher: Okay. I would appreciate it if you would take all your extra pieces of paper and put them in a nice neat pile in the middle of this cardboard for me....all your extra pieces of paper.

Children: I got a little piece. How about the glue? Do you want us to turn the glue in?

Teacher: Yes, and don't forget to turn your glue caps-your orange caps- so it's nice and tight.

Child: I don't need my crayons anymore. My brother said.....(all chattering)

Teacher: You're not going to have time to do another one. Hold your sculpture up. See, if you put this up against anything and it's not dry. It's going to get all messy.

The two slow starters appear to have finished in good time--and with very interesting constructions.

Child:	Can we bring these home?
Teacher:	Yes, you can bring them home. Do you like it Robert? Okay, are all the glue bottles nice and tight?
Child:	I didn't use any, Miss Alibani.
Teacher:	You're going to have to finish. I would like you to put the paper on top of the cardboard in a neat pile. I would love to have you stay, but other boys and girls are coming in.
Child:	Yeah, for tomorrow....for tomorrow and today.
Teacher:	That's right....You didn't clean up the paper and put it all in a neat pile....and all the crayons back in the boxes.
Child:	I'm done.
Classroom Teacher:	Let's put the glue back on the side over here. And crayons back in the boxes and boxes of crayons back on the side. Come on....if you just want to color it you can finish it back in the room. Miss Alibani has another class coming in. How about you people over here. Could you put the good pieces in a nice neat pile and throw the scraps away please....There are two garbage cans at the back of the room....

Dewey has likened learning experiences to the creation of internal mind structures. These structures are the foundations for future experiences leading to higher levels in a, hopefully, never ending progression. The feeling quality as well as the intellectual quality of these experiences is crucial--particularly if we take seriously the idea that children should eventually become self educating. We believe that in order for this ideal to be fulfilled provision must be made in the curriculum for individual expression as well as for the vocational demands of society. The girl (below) knows this educational product is <u>hers</u>. And nothing can surpass that satisfaction.

The comments above are not intended as a line by line analyzation, since it is obvious to the reader what is occurring. Rather, the comments are intended to relate aspects of MOPPET theory to the actual lesson process. We have found that, lacking an understanding of these theoretical relationships, observers of MOPPET lessons often conclude that activities are handled in an arbitrary manner or that they are dictated by the style of the teacher. Actually, despite the flexibleness of the lessons, there is little that is arbitrary--one way or another the essential elements of the lessons must be included if the lesson is to be successful in terms of a creative experience.

Many readers may be displeased with the analysis given of the lesson. Certainly the teaching could have been approached from many different points of view. In fact, if the analysis had been made from the traditional convergent point of view, many of the comments could have been given reverse interpretations. However, it must be kept in mind that the divergent approach is in many respects the exact opposite of the traditional approach. This is what makes the MOPPET approach so difficult for teachers to learn.

Another element in MOPPET that bothers teachers is the relaxation of control they see as being necessary to the drawing out process. What they commonly miss is that the relaxation of control is only a matter of degree. The close

observer will have noted several instances in the lesson above where control was getting shaky. They also will have noted that the teacher quickly brought the class back under control. Obviously, the objectives of the lesson could not have been achieved in a too lax situation.

The fact is that MOPPET lessons tend to be conducted close to the border line of the self control that a given class is capable of. This is necessary in order to create a climate of relative freedom in which children can express themselves more fully. However, the situation is far from a state of complete license that some teachers infer. Underneath the appearances an adept MOPPET teacher is aware that there are degrees of freedom that are appropriate and necessary to different activities. In reality MOPPET lessons are very structured, and one should not doubt this just because they appear at times to be extremely permissive.

One dimension of MOPPET lessons that gets little attention is the fact that by working so much of the time near the limits of children's self-control, the children through trial and error become aware of why the limits are there at all. Thus, they tend to be willing to accept responsibility for their own freedom. As a consequence they become over time much more mature in behavior and more self-directing in their activities.

The second lesson is a third grade poetry lesson "Moonbird," which could also have been taught at a lower grade level. In this lesson Form D is used. The INPUT is separate. The INTERACTION actually comes in the middle of the lesson, but it continues through the EXPERIENCE; therefore it is easier to use Form D. It should be mentioned that whenever a lesson is developed that does not fit one of the lesson forms described in Section I of this manual, the teacher may modify the forms or create new ones. The forms were developed as a convenience in organizing lessons. The only firm rule we have is: that one way or another there must be a significant INPUT, INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE in order for the lesson to result in a contribution to creative growth.

GRADE - KINDERGARTEN, FIRST, SECOND, THIRD

MOONBIRD

OBJECTIVES

. At the end of this lesson the child will be able to:

Open his/her imagination.

Have fun writing.

Be aware of relationships between people, especially brother and sister.

EQUIPMENT

- 16 mm projector
- Slide projector (optional)
- Projection screen

MATERIALS

- MOPPET Kit

  16 mm film, "Moonbird," Grove Press, color, 10 minutes, 1959

  Tray of "Moonbird" slides - children's drawings

- Also

  Writing paper and pencils

  Crayons

LESSON SCHEME

INPUT	INTERACTION	EXPERIENCE
	Begin the lesson with a discussion about brothers and sisters. Ask: "Who has brothers and sisters?" Follow whatever reactions seem most prevalent for a brief discussion of this topic.	
Before showing the film, explain that it has won an Academy Award and that the Hubleys (film makers) used the voices of their young children in the film. Ask the children to listen carefully because the boy is a baby and his speech is a little difficult to understand. (I usually give a little demonstration of "baby talk.")		
Show the film, "Moonbird."	Discuss with the children the brothers in the film: "How did they act toward each other?" "How did they seem to feel about each other?"	Ask the children to write about their brothers and sisters. The teacher can walk around the room and give help as needed.

LESSON SCHEME (Continued)

INPUT	INTERACTION	EXPERIENCE
As a further stimulus, show slides of children's poems and pictures based on this lesson.	Discuss some of the poetry seen on slides.	At this point, the children may want to add to their poetry.
	Read poetry written by the class, always giving the option of leaving names off papers or not having poems read aloud.	

- Bette Distler -

THIRD GRADE POETRY LESSON "MOONBIRD"

Transcript

Teacher: How are you?

Children: Fine (chorus). (one) How are you?

Teacher: I'm fine too, thank you. Let me tell you what I want to do today. Okay..... uh... How many of you have brothers and sisters?

Children: (undistinguishable mass affirmative response)

Teacher: Everybody?

Children: (one) I have mostly...

Teacher: You have mostly brothers?

Child: No, all boys, all boys now. But my sister, only one of them she moved.

Teacher: Oh! She moved.

Child: Yeah, she got da da da da (wedding march).

Child: I wish my sister would too.

Teacher: I know that feeling. You wish your sister would leave?

Comments & Pictures

The MOPPET poetry teacher, Bette Distler, was originally influenced by the approach of Kenneth Koch. However, she then went on to develop a style of her own, which can be observed in this lesson. Her basic premise is that poetry is the language of the feelings, and if we can help children to express how they really feel, the result is poetry. This does not mean that in the proper circumstances complete poems automatically gush forth (although this frequently happens) but, rather, it means that the main eloquent stuff of poetry is produced, which frequently needs very little shaping or changing to make a good poem.

Child: I wish my sister would stay so we can play.

Child: Mine is just the opposite.

Teacher: How many of you.... is there somebody who doesn't have a brother and sister? Anybody? .... You all do?

Child: I don't have a brother.

Teacher: You have a sister. At least a brother or a sister. Right.

Child: She's taking pictures. (chattering) (Refers to R. Mazzeo photographing class)

Teacher: I want to show you a movie. Could I have your attention, I want to show you a movie.

Child: Oh, wow!

Teacher: You have to concentrate. Listen.... it's about two brothers and it doesn't matter if you saw it before. You know how many times I've seen it?

Children: (Chorus of guesses).

Child: Two million.

Teacher: Two million, right.

Child: (Laughter)

Teacher: I want you to see... Excuse me... I want you to see when you're watching the movie if you

Mrs. Distler has a very informal approach to teaching poetry. As a MOPPET teacher, she may see as many as 100 classes in a year, therefore she needs to build rapport quickly in order to make classes comfortable enough so that she can work effectively with them. Many teachers may not wish to work with their classes in such an informal manner. However, regardless of the degree of informality involved, the teacher must develop an atmosphere of concern and, above all, of trust if he/she seriously expects children to expose their deepest feelings.

Teacher: can tell how the brothers feel about each other. Okay?

Child: (Excitedly) Oh, I think I know. I think I know. It's about what this... uh ... they're doing magic potions.

Teacher: No, it's another one. It's a different one.

Child: Oh, that's a different one.

Teacher: The thing I must tell you is, you have to listen carefully because one of the brothers is very little.

Child: And one of them is big.

Teacher: And he sings all the time and that's all he does is sing. So you have to concentrate because he sings like this (low and flat), "I've been working on the railroad"... he sings just like that... "all the live long"....just like that... "day." Okay?

Child: (singing) Hello my....(inaudible)....

Teacher: I think I sing better than he did.

Child: Who sings John Denver songs? (Imitation)

Teacher: Alright....(excessive noise).... Do you remember what I asked you... excuse me, excuse me. Do you remember what I asked you now? What do I want you to watch for?

As was mentioned earlier, in "Moonbird" the INPUT is separate, with the INTERACTION dialogue and the EXPERIENCE in writing overlapping in the latter part of the lesson. Since the INPUT is separate from the INTERACTION, the dialogue does not have to follow the course of the INPUT presentation and therefore the discussion is free to go much further afield if the teacher considers it desirable.

It will be seen that the dialogue leading up to the INPUT film is focused on the general theme of brothers and sisters. As in the previous lesson, "Clouds," the INPUT motivation is not abruptly presented to the class without preparation.

Child: How the brothers feel.

Teacher: How the brothers feel because do you remember what I told you poetry is? What's poetry?

Child: Feelings.

Teacher: Feelings. Okay. So watch the movie and see at the end of the movie if you can tell me the way they feel about....who?

Child: Us.

Child: Them.

Child: They feel about each other.

Teacher: Right! Thank you. Okay.... are you ready ....(inaudible)... Quiet.

Child: Bobby, get off that.

Child: (Humming)

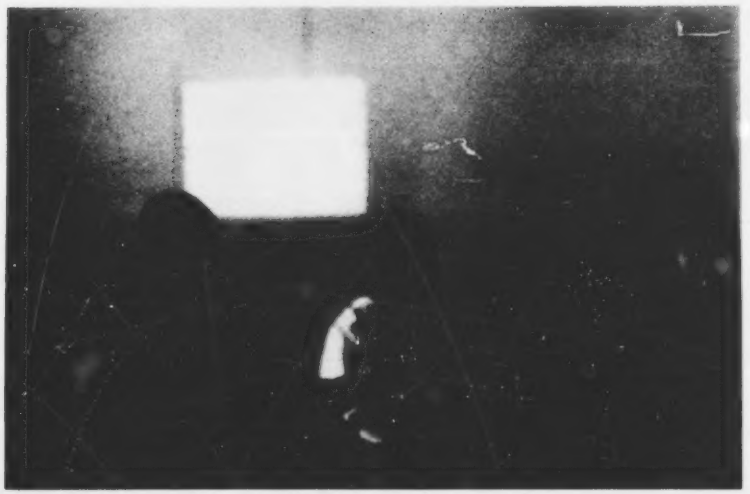
MOVIE BEING SHOWN

MOVIE ENDS

(Some clapping)

Teacher: What did you think?

Child: I think the kid that sung stunk.



The film "Moonbird" was a good selection from the standpoint of stimulating discussion. In a sense it has a very familiar theme, that of a boy and his younger brother. However, in the unfolding of the story the film reveals an unusual dimension--the younger brother sings rather than talks much of the time. Thus the distance between the familiar theme of the two boys (with which all the children can easily identify) and the oddness of the singing communications (which they integrate only with difficulty) opens up a wide range of speculation. The best

Teacher: You think the kid that sung stunk. You think he couldn't sing?

Child: Yeah!

Children: (chorally commenting on the singing)

Teacher: How old do you think the little boy was?

Children: Around four.... four.... four.

Teacher: Uh ha!

Child: One.

Teacher: One?

Children: About three.... four.... five minutes old.

Teacher: Five minutes old. How old do you think the big one was?

Children: Around ten.... seven.... ten.

Teacher: How old are you?

Children: Nine....eight....nine....nine.

Teacher: Do you think he was about the same age as you? Was he about the same?.....

Children: Yeah! I'm eight.

materials for stimulating creative thought tend to be those which contain familiar elements with which children can easily identify, but which also contain strong, provocative elements of the novel which stimulate mental exploration.

Teacher: Do you think the older one was about the same age as you?

Children: Yeah! Yeah!

Teacher: Maybe. What, what did you think about the way they were together?.... How do you think the big one treated the little one?

Children: Mean! Nice..... (inaudible)....

Teacher: The big one treated the little one nice? And the little one... (inaudible)... wait let her say what...when...aha...Wait, I want to hear what you said.... Let Kelly talk.

Kelly: Um, when the um...little brother um...wanted ....(inaudible)....

Teacher: Would you say the.... do you think the big one had patience?

Children: Yeah..... No.

Teacher: Huh!

Children: Yeah.....No.

Teacher: Was he kind to him... do you think?

Children: No.... Yeah.... No.

Teacher: You don't think he was kind?

Children: (Mixed) Yeah.... No.

Child: At the end he threw him in the um...hole.

Teacher: Why did he throw him in the hole with him?

Child: He thought he might scare the birds so he pulled him down into the hole.

Teacher: How did he get him in the hole? How did he get the little brother in the hole?

Child: He just pulled him in.

Teacher: Before he did that, how did he get him to come near him? What did he do?

Child: He started singing.

Teacher: Why did he start to sing?

Child: 'Cause he wanted the kid to come.

Teacher: What happened when the little kid heard singing?

Child: He came.

Teacher: Why?

Child: Because he liked it.

Teacher: Yeah!

The teacher goes around the group to prevent the dialogue from falling into a narrow pattern wherein four or five dominant children monopolize the discussion.

Child: He likes singing so much.

Child: Yeah, and then they end up la, de, da. (singing)

Teacher: Can I quote you la, de, da?

Child: No.

Teacher: What about the idea.... there's one thing I'd like to ask you.... What about the big brother that took the little brother in the first place? Do you think he had to take him?

Children: No.

Child: But he should have.

Teacher: He should have. What do you mean?..... What do you mean?

Child: Well.

Teacher: What do you mean he should have?

Child: Well, uh... first of all the little kid, he would have gone up to his father, you know, and made .... no beat him and make his father wake up and then he might have, uh.... told him to get up and tell him what uh.... happened.

Teacher: Oh! So in other words what you're saying is that the big brother took the little brother with him because he was afraid the little brother might wake up the parents.... the father?

Since the present lesson is made up predominantly of INTERACTION dialogue, there is plenty of time for both short and long responses. Therefore, the teacher is not confining herself to questions that can be answered with a simple short answer. For example, when she says, "What do you mean he should have?", it is obvious that a fairly long answer is necessary. The student does in fact give a rather lengthy answer, although it is obviously a struggle. A few lines later the teacher tries again, "Why do you think he wanted to?", but this time the hoped for response is not forthcoming. However, instead of persisting until the child becomes uncomfortable, she quickly goes back to the group with a general question.

The taping of a lesson is an excellent technique teachers can employ to examine their own INTERACTION styles. This method holds many surprises, for teachers frequently discover that certain traits dominate regardless of whether they are appropriate in all situations. Thus a strength in one circumstance can be a weakness in another.

It is presumed that experience auto-

Child: And tell him what happened.

Teacher: And tell them. Okay. Is there another reason why.... is there any other reason why the big brother might have taken the little brother with him?

Child: 'Cause he wanted to.

Teacher: Why do you think he wanted to?

Child: Oh!

Teacher: Is there any other reason that anybody can think of?

Child: His father was goin' to kill him.

Teacher: Oh, his father was going to kill him.

Child: He cared about him.

Teacher: He cared about him. Did any of you get that feeling the big brother cared about the little brother?

Child: I never got that feeling.

Teacher: You didn't get the feeling?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: You got that feeling that he....

Children: (Mixed together) I never did....yeah, what happened... What happened to him then?.... Goodbye.... He died....Goodbye.... How... he went goodbye.

matically leads to improved teaching. However, in practice such improvement is minimal except when a teacher is self-critical. Some people are natural born teachers, but for most of us teaching is a deliberately learned process. And there are few techniques as revealing (and also nonthreatening) as the tape recording (videotaping, of course, is even better) for teachers to dispassionately compare what they do with what they think they are doing. All MOPPET teachers are taped many times, and they are in agreement that it is an invaluable method for analyzing their teaching and improving it.

This lesson was taped, of course, and photographed too. The children are obviously aware of this, but it doesn't disturb them after their initial curiosity is satisfied.

Child: I used to have two, but one died when he was a baby.

Teacher: Your brother died when he was a baby?

Child: Yeah.... but I have one left.

Child: I got one.

Teacher: You used to have two brothers that died?

Child: Yeah, they both died when they were little babies.

Teacher: Did you know them?

Child: No, they would have been seventeen when I was born.

Teacher: Yes, what were you going to say?

Child: Um....my mother had six kids. One of the kids died.

Child: How many people die in that place?

Teacher: Your mother had six kids you say.

Child: No, my mother has five kids now and one of them died. We would have had six.

Teacher: Oh, but you didn't know the one that died.

At this point the conversation departs from the characters in the film and returns to the personal experiences of the children. However, unlike the somewhat surface dialogue of the introduction, it now has a much more serious tone, with the problem of death (a very real one to children) recurring again and again.

In the course of the conversation the children are gradually controlling the content more and more. The teacher is continually questioning them on different points, but she does not try to steer them away from the recounting of their personal experiences, for these are obviously experiences about which the children feel very strongly--which is the raw stuff of the poetry.

Thus the dialogue continues like a chain reaction, with the teacher listening carefully, watching the children's faces and posture to make sure that all the children who wish to speak get a chance to be heard.

Child: We didn't know if it was a boy or a girl.

Teacher: I see.

Child: The Mannings, next to us... the girl had a disease, uh, she died.

Teacher: Did you know her?

Child: Uh, no...yeah, no, no....I know she was one of the Mannings. Now they only have fourteen people in the family.

Child: (astonished) Fourteen.

Child: My uncle got ran over by a train.

Child: So, I know someone who has seventeen.

Teacher: Did you see your uncle get hit by a train?

Child: My mother and father weren't hurt, just my little brother.

Teacher: Where it happened, you mean he got killed?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: My God.

Child: Everybody's dying in this place.

Child: I'd like to die.

Teacher: You'd what?

Obviously there are different levels to the dialogue. For example, the child describing an uncle's death from a train is not talking on the same level of seriousness as the child, a few lines later, who pretended to die seven times in a war. Immediately thereafter Karen describes a deformed infant who was undergoing plastic surgery, which again moves the dialogue back from the pretend level to the tragic.

It is difficult to conduct this kind of very serious INTERACTION dialogue. One of the problems is that some of the events described are stated in such a way as to appear funny. However, the main problem involves preventing the discussion from becoming bogged down in excessive playfulness or escapism, on the one hand, and on the other extreme, to prevent the tragic events from leading to a depressed atmosphere.

Child: He'd like to die.

Child: I died seven times in one war.

Teacher: You died seven times in one war, you said?

Child: Yeah, so did I use to die whenever we were doing that..... We would play war and maybe I would jump off the thing and...and pretend I was dead.

Teacher: What were you going to say Karen?

Karen: (indistinguishable)

Teacher: Wait, excuse me. I want to hear what Karen's saying.

Karen: Sunday night I went to my church and I saw this little baby. It was born with no eyes, the eyes are like this with like cracks for eyes and no nose and...and they had to take her hip bone and cut it to make a nose.

Children: (moaning) Sounds of displeasure.

Karen: Her hair it's so short and it's like down.... it's almost bald.

Children: (More sounds of displeasure)

Teacher: Were they doing plastic surgery on the baby?

Karen: Yeah.

Teacher: Can they help her? Can they help the baby?

Karen: She can talk good.

Teacher: She can talk good?

Child: What could she say?

Teacher: Does she look alright now?

Karen: Yeah.....the next time they have to do something on the eyeballs.

Teacher: How did you feel when you saw her, Karen?

Karen: I almost screamed it was so ugly.

Teacher: Did you get frightened when you saw her?

Karen: Yeah, she was runnin' around. I ran into my mother and hid behind her.

Teacher: How do you think the little girl feels? Is it a little girl?

Karen: Yeah.

Teacher: How do you think she feels?

Karen: I don't know.

Teacher: How old is she?

Karen: I don't know that.

The reader has probably noticed that most of the extended comments in the earlier part of the lesson were made by the teacher. The situation is now reversed; most of the long comments are made by the students. This pattern tends to change back again later when the teacher starts to comment on the poetry.

Karen's discourse about the unfortunate infant has engaged the interest of the class, and the teacher helps the child recount what she knows about the case. The teacher is careful to question Karen in such a way as to bring out the positive things that are being done to help the unfortunate child.

Some teachers (and administrators too) have the idea that themes involving unpleasantness, tragedy or problems that defy easy solution are not fit subject matter for school work. Yet, such things are inescapable in life. If we avoid them entirely the school curriculum takes the first step toward irrelevance, and children rightly begin to suspect that school has little to do with the real world as they know it. As we see it in MOPPET, children are interested in the full range of life as they experience it, and the job of the teacher is not to skillfully avoid the unpleasant or difficult subjects, but rather to handle them in a positive manner.

Teacher: How do you think her parents feel?

Karen: They didn't take her. This old lady did.

Teacher: What do you mean?

Karen: Like, her parents didn't.....(noise)...

Teacher: They didn't what...wait...excuse me, I want to hear what Karen's saying.

Karen: They didn't want her.

Teacher: Her parents didn't want her?

Karen: No, 'cause they left here there.

Teacher: An old lady adopted her you mean?

Karen: Yeah.

Teacher: And is the lady taking care of her?

Karen: (Not heard, another child coughing.)

Child: I wouldn't feel so hot you know with a baby coming along, yeah Mrs. Hoffman, she would have had twins but she found out that they were...you know....dead after she...uh...when they were... uh ...born when they were a couple hours old....no not a couple hours.

Teacher: She lives next door to you, or near you?

Child:	She lives...she lives...she lives across the street from me, next to Mannings .
Teacher:	Oh, I see. The Mannings are the people who have fourteen people in their home.
Child:	Yeah.
Teacher:	What did you want to say.
Child:	Like a....my brother right...(noisy)....
Teacher:	Wait, excuse me, I'd like to hear what Bobby's saying. Your brother and his friend what?
Bobby:	Yeah, his friend Stuie Berger.
Teacher:	Yeah?
Bobby:	And his friend, his father's friend, the guy had a baby sitter right, cause they went... the mother and father went out, right.... and because the baby was around one years old, so...and then, uh, my brother and, uh, like Stu, my brother's friend Stu, he, uh, had to take care of, uh, the little kids... well, this other girl had to take care of them, that lives next door.
Teacher:	Right.
Bobby:	And, uh, so my, uh, brother and Stuie, right, so the baby sitter didn't know the baby was in the oven cause the baby just

In The Language of the Classroom, Arno Bellack and his associates examined the dialogue in a large number of senior high school classrooms. The findings revealed that teachers dominate the conversation, frequently making as many as 90% or more of the statements that move the dialogue forward. This fact is interjected here in order to clarify one point: it is commonly believed that teachers must dominate the dialogue of young children because they are not yet capable of moving the conversation forward in a constructive manner; but, the reasoning continues, this pattern will be gradually changed as the children grow older and develop better verbal skills. This belief is obviously false. Apparently teachers are not able to decide at what point they will commence to draw on the improved student skills. Or could it be that they never notice the emergence of competent language skills in their classes? At any rate, teachers do in fact continue to dominate the classroom dialogue right through high school. It is quite possible that children are never able to demonstrate their ability to constructively carry on a dialogue because teachers rarely give them any opportunity to develop this ability.

The discourse in the left column by Bobby is about as stumbling as it can be and yet it remains intelligible. Doubtless, his skills in carrying on a dialogue are minimal.

Bobby: walked in th-e...the oven was open, right, and she jumped onto the oven, see, and then....and then, uh, the babysitter didn't see her in the oven so she closed it and she put somethin' in it....somethin' like food, right, and then she put on the heat and she burned the baby.

Children: (Moaning) Sounds of displeasure.

Teacher: Is the baby alright now?

Bobby: Nope, she's dead. (Mumbled discussion among children)

Teacher: That sounds very....my God. How did you feel....when did this happen Bobby?

Bobby: I don't know. A couple of years ago my brother told me.

Teacher: How did you feel?

Child: Yeah, it was on the news.

Bobby: It was my brother's friend and, uh, he used to play with her.

Child: Yeah, some....some lady she had a baby, it was on the news and she, uh, she left the baby in the bathtub and she never turned off the water and she went someplace and the baby drowned.

However, underneath the stumbling words Bobby obviously has a realization of all the ingredients needed in an organized description of the tragic experience: characters, action, explanations of unclear aspects, and finally the tragic conclusion. In short, Bobby already has the main conceptualizing ability necessary to describe the incident that he did in fact describe. What he needs is extended developmental experience in the establishment of better verbal skills.

We know that in homes where good English expression is insisted on, that the children usually speak exceedingly well by the third grade. Therefore, if our schools are serious about raising the level of language

Teacher: How did you know about that?

Child: It said on the news.... a couple years back.

Teacher: How did you feel when you heard it?

Child: Well, now that we're talkin' about dead people....

Teacher: Yeah, you know what I would like...Dean, did you want to say something?

Dean: Yeah, well, a couple years ago when my sister, uh, around sixteen, she died. We were in the house and my mother was watching television, she went to church and my mother said don't go to church and it was around five o'clock.

Child: (interrupting) She got hit by a car.

Dean: (Continuing) It gets dark around six o'clock, so on the way goin' there she, uh, my friend that lives right next door to me, he, they were goin' to pick her up and they, the car was right there and she was right on the curb and this guy came and hit her. And my fath... when my mother came, she came running out of the house and when my father first got back from hunting, he had all his stuff.

Child: (Interrupting) His huntin' stuff on?

Dean: And so we went to the hospital and then when ....then she got back.

development among the general student population, more attention must be given in the curriculum to the development of student verbal expression. It follows also that ability in writing can rarely rise very far above verbal ability. Therefore, the reader is asked to recognize that the INTERACTION dialogue illustrated here involves not only an extended discussion on a theme with the objective of producing enough meaningful material to enable the children to write good poetry, but it also provides an opportunity to develop better verbal abilities.

This explanation is given to help clarify our statement in the previous lesson, "Clouds," in which we said that every MOPPET lesson is a language arts lesson. The INTERACTION dialogue in poetry has certain elements of similarity with the dialogue in creative drama, music, art, movement and filmmaking. Thus, the skills developed in one area are directly transferable to the others. Also, in the act of transfer, the children learn to use the new abilities in a variety of circumstances, for each of the MOPPET disciplines has a different sense approach and certain essential differences in vocabulary.

Child: (Interrupting) With all the huntin' stuff on?

Dean: Yeah, and when she got back, when she got back everybody came over...we had a party and all....not like really a party like stuff.

Teacher: How did you feel when you saw her when she came back?

Dean: I didn't, I was upstairs... I didn't open up my eyes, I just walked downstairs with my hands over my eyes and then I fell down the stairs and I opened my eyes then.

Teacher: Why did you do that?

Dean: 'Cause, I didn't want to see, ugh,...she had a cast up to here on...she had stitches on her eye, ugh.

Teacher: How did you feel when you saw her?

Dean: Not so good.

Teacher: Not so good?

Dean: Almost a year she had the cast on.

Teacher: Is she okay now?

Dean: Yeah, she still gets pains in her legs when it's cold out.

It is interesting that the children very soon commence to sense the interdisciplinary aspect of MOPPET. They do not think of MOPPET as a series of separate experiences such as music, art, etc., but rather they grasp the unity of approach. Consequently, they simply call the whole thing MOPPET. Obviously the reinforcing effect of the separate discipline areas is not a process that goes on without the students' awareness; quite the contrary, they are very conscious of similarities in the various areas. Through

Child: Which one? Darlene....or somethin'?

Dean: Yeah.

Child: Oh yeah, Darlene.

Teacher: I'm glad she's better. Karen what did you want?

Dean: She has $6,000 in the bank.

Child: You can give three to me.

Dean: No three....one.

Teacher: Did she give you one?

Dean: Yeah, she gave me one. I have a thousand dollars and, uh, fifty-two dollars.

Teacher: Oh wow, that was nice.

Child: Can I borrow fifty....two dollars and a couple thousand?

Dean: I'm spending fifty-two dollars on my mother 'cause my mother and father and 'cause it's their anniversary.

Child: (singing) Happy Anniversary to you...

Dean: And Father's Day is coming up so I bought my mother, uh.....

Child: A guitar...(laughter) electric guitar.

the creative process they also become aware that the arts have a basic similarity of function, although the avenue of means for each may be quite different. Thus, a concept of the unity of all the arts is a natural outcome of a MOPPET program.

Teacher: What did you buy your mother?

Dean: I don't know. I bought her a table or somethin'. You know, those things outside like a picnic table.

Teacher: Oh, right.

Dean: Things that...like the hoods...cause we needed one. I bought her one of those and I bought my father....what do you call it, for Father's Day. He wants a somethin', I don't know...somethin' for his guns cleaning. It's cleaning stuff that costs a lot of money. It costs around ten bucks. It's just a little jar like that. It's like that acid stuff to clean out the guns like.

Child: Yeah, when your father came home from huntin' he heard about Darlene.

Dean: Yeah, and then he ran out the door and he had all his stuff....

Child: Oh, where's the man that did it "bang."

Dean: Yeah,...(inaudible)... hospital he had his knives on him and they took the knives away from him.

Teacher: Yeah?

Dean: So my father put his gun under the chair, you know, under the chair in the car.

Child: He would have blown his top off.

Teacher: Well, you can understand that, can't you? It makes him angry. How many, um..... How

Teachers who are very specialist conscious may well question the value of the interdisciplinary aspect of MOPPET. Their reasoning follows the conventional belief that the highest level of excellence is achieved through intense specialization. Why, they ask, waste time on things that are not absolutely essential?

We can only answer that question by pointing out that we have had a great deal of experience in employing MOPPET in many different ways. For example, we have worked in classes that were given 15 or 20 lessons in poetry, music or creative drama, but who did not receive many other lessons. When comparing these classes with others we have taught, we have found that the classes that have received a balanced MOPPET program over an extended period will at the end of the year produce better poetry, for example, as a result of six poetry lessons than will the classes that have received 15 or 20 poetry lessons, but did not receive the whole program.

We cannot explain technically why this happens, but it is our contention that the complete MOPPET experience contributes to the building of such a rich foundation of experiences that children are thereby enabled to function better in each of the separate areas. There is no question that this rich experience also has a beneficial influence on the childrens' performance in other areas of school work.

Teacher: many people here can understand how angry his father must have been?

Children: Yeah, yeah. I would have blown my top.

Dean: A friend was over my house when it happened.

Teacher: Right.

Dean: A friend was playing with me over my house.

Child: I would have shot the cop.

Dean: When my father got home he had so much stuff on him, he had knives, and switchblades on him. He had his, uh, 45.

Teacher: You mean he had that on him because he was coming from hunting?

Dean: Yeah, from huntin' and he got a buck and he was mad, he was mad.

Teacher: Right. How did you feel....how did you....do you remember when he blew his stack? You were scared.

Dean: I was scared, I was gonna run outa the house with my mother and see what happened.

Child: He takes the horn off the animal, he goes runnin' to the cop....(hissing sound)....(inaudible) the horns and throws him.

Dean: And then, and then, when it happened my sister came right then. Nobody was home except for me. Everybody was sleeping and my sister was

Dean: up and she was sleeping in a hospital bed like downstairs in my dining room.

Teacher: Right.

Dean: And somebody broke into the house, into the garage, the thing was broken and my father went out with a 45 on him and they saw, they saw the guy that broke into Dr. Jensen's right after they broke into ours and my father stepped on a glass and he cut his, uh, whole hand up and the cops....so my father went right into the door and, uh, when the guy was just goin' out the door and the cops got him. My sister was, my sister was scared.

Child: Yeah, he had his 45 on him too.

Dean: Yup, his 45.

Child: Hello Darlene, ya like my hand, I just painted it.

Dean: I was scared. I was scared half to death.

Child: I got one.

Teacher: Go ahead....and then you can talk, okay?

Child: My sister told my....let's see...my sister found out from her friend that her friend like...she had a little sister, a older brother....no, she didn't have, she didn't....she had her...she was about..... my sister was about, about let's see, about six when this happened. Her friend was about six too and

When Bette Distler first started teaching poetry she did not use media, and being exceptionally adept at talking to children, she was able to get them to write in a relatively short time. However, the MOPPET program required that media be used and also that dialogue and other activities frequently be tied in to other purposes in addition to poetry. Her ultimate conclusion is that the media input, extended dialogue, and other related activities in MOPPET make the teaching of poetry much easier and better.

This, again, supports our general contention that the richness of the program tends to benefit each of the separate disciplines. The practice of carefully planning the INPUT media presentation, of conducting extended INTERACTION dialogues (the present lesson is an obvious example), and of carrying out a very accepting and free ranging EXPERIENCE, all of this may seem to many teachers to be doing much more than is necessary to achieve the objectives of teaching poetry, art or whatever. However, in addition to the objectives stated in the lesson

Child: she had a little baby sister....and the, uh, mother and father went to, uh, this play... like the movies. Yeah, they went to the movies and the, uh, they had to get a babysitter. So the babysitter came over and the, um, and the, uh, one part in the bedroom.....

Teacher: Right.

Child: The, um.... my sister's friend, like she was just, 'cause like she had this skinny stove like....(inaudible).....

Teacher: And when your sister found out she was crying and she couldn't sleep, what a, what a terrible thing. How old were you when this happened?

Child: (Mumbled)

Teacher: How old is your sister now?

Child: My sister now is twelve.

Teacher: Oh, what a terrible thing. My God..... Yes, it's your turn to talk. Go ahead.

Child: Um....

Teacher: Excuse me, go ahead.

Child: ...(inaudible)... is going to the hospital today. The baby....

Teacher: Who was going to the hospital?

plan, MOPPET lessons always have the general objectives of improving self concept and of promoting a better attitude toward school. In addition, lessons are also aimed at the improvement in language ability and in bringing about an interdisciplinary understanding of the role of the arts in human affairs.

Obviously, all these objectives cannot be fulfilled in each lesson, but they are general goals that MOPPET teachers keep continually in mind when they plan lessons. They never plan a lesson that has a very simple goal, such as an exercise in writing, in art, etc. All teachers can easily do these things without any help. MOPPET exists to help with the much more difficult task of bringing the arts and sciences together into a general humanistic frame of reference that children can understand and build upon.

Child: Me.

Teacher: Yeah!

Child: I had to go to the doctor's office when I was a baby and my mother is going, was waiting at the doctor's office till I was done and I ran out the door and I got, I got hit by a car when I was a baby.

Teacher: Oh wow! Do you remember that?

Child: Yeah, my mother told me that I had to go back in the doctor's office.

Teacher: Do you remember it? I know your mother told you. Sometimes, sometimes we hear stories... do you remember it though?

Child: No.

Teacher: You don't remember it. Alright. Yes, go ahead.

Child: I saw this program, The Waltons and, um, like ...um, I don't know, this friend came over, and um, he had like a little cold, and she wanted to make this, um, I don't know, um, something flu or somethin'. Yeah.....

Teacher: I saw that too.

Child: Yeah, and he went down to cut a piece of..... and he was like tired, he was so tired, he fainted, you know....he fainted on the ground. So um, John Boy and um, the other boy, I forgot his uh, name....

We are aware that our discourse in this column may appear at times to have a rather distant relationship to the rather lengthy recitation of experiences that has been proceeding in the left-hand column. Our purpose in using this approach is partly to avoid a long commentary on a dialogue whose surface meaning is obvious. However, our main reason is to explain some of the underlying theoretical and philosophical base which guides the development of such lessons. In our view, the INTERACTION dialogue on the left does not consist of a mere "swapping" of experiences. Instead, it is a struggling, deeply felt (perhaps even painful to some) dialogue that is bringing the children into the more profound level where poetry and art reside, a somewhat deeper level than everyday discourse. If the session is successful in bringing about some understanding and appreciation of that dimension of life, all the time and effort will be well spent.

Child: Ben.

Child: Yeah, and um...then Ben went to go get the um, father and...um...they brought him to the um... doctors room and um, he said he could be able to um, he was only gonna be able to live for one year. So the mother, the mother was like real sad and everything. She said don't jump a-round because they were jumping around....the Walton's kids....she said, don't jump around cause she was real sad. So their...the father comes home cause he was a singer and he found out, um and he like, that ....and like that was real sad and everything.

Teacher: You know what I.... I'm so glad you mentioned the Walton's. I'd like to talk to you a minute about that. You know what? You know how John Boy always keeps those notebooks?

Children: Yeah.

Teacher: You know how he always writes?

Child: A diary.

Teacher: The diary. You know I would love you to do that. Do you think you could do that?

Children: ....(inaudible)....

Teacher: Doesn't have to have a key..... Don't you remember.....

Child: I have a diary.

The description by one of the children of an episode from "The Waltons" television program presents an opportunity for the teacher to bring up the subject of keeping a private journal. Since John Boy is a familiar figure to the children, his practice of keeping a notebook to daily record his private thoughts seems natural to many of them. One of the techniques the teacher uses is to encourage children to keep a personal journal so that each day they can enter whatever thoughts, ideas, impressions, experiences, wishes, etc., that they want to keep. Such journals can be fun, but, as we know, they have been the real beginning in the organizing of life's experiences for many, many people of great achievement from all walks of life.

Child: I have to have a key cause I'm gonna go someplace.

Teacher: You know, you could probably find a place that nobody would look in. Maybe under your bed or in a secret drawer. Don't you have a place.

Child: Oh yeah, sure, my sister....

Teacher: If you don't tell her where it is, she wouldn't look.

Child: She's only a little kid, she looks all over.

Teacher: John Boy puts it under his bed. You know what, how John Boy writes in it. That's what all writers do. I do that too.

Child: You know what I do?

Teacher: What?

Child: You know the mattress, well, I have two mattresses like that. I slip the mattress like that and I stick one book in the mattress where all the fluffy stuff is and nobody finds out cause they go digging in there and it was all the way in the back and it was right here and they were digging.

Child: You know they felt something but they said, ah, forget about that, they put all the stuff back.

This activity cannot be approached in the same spirit as homework; i.e. we do it if we are required to, but otherwise not. On the contrary, this activity should be one that children look forward to as something nice they do for themselves. This viewpoint is demonstrated by the child in our lesson who is already engaged in writing a book that he hides in his mattress. Obviously he considers it something precious. It also appears that the child considers his writing to be very personal and does not wish to share it--at least, not yet.

Teacher: Well, you know what? If, if you would do this, if you would do this maybe from now on till the end of the summer, till September and then maybe when you come back in September, you can bring it in and if you want to show it to me, you can show it to me.

Child: Not me.

Teacher: You don't want to do it?

Children: (Mixed reactions)

Teacher: You have a lot of important stuff. Well, you know the stuff?

Child: I have a book that I'm writing. I have...I have like maybe a page by page.....

Teacher: Do you? You know it would be a great thing if you would write how you feel everyday.

Child: Yeah, but you know, at the end he gave the flu to um, Ben and like Ben was real sick. Like, you know, he....you know...like real helpful and everything and he gave it to him.

Teacher: Um,hum. I know, I remember that. I saw that. That was very touching.

Child: And then, um....Grandpa comes in and says well, I'm sorry he is going to die. It's hard to forget about him.

When the teacher suggests that all the children write everyday, it becomes clear that some of them have the conventional idea (gotten from movies most likely) that daily writing in diaries is done to record one's romantic life. They are not yet familiar with the idea that writing for one's self can embrace all of the events in life that we consider worth keeping. The teacher obviously is unwilling to make a sharp distinction between the value of writing now in class, and of writing in a journal at

Teacher: Right, right. It is hard....Boys and girls, you know what? If anyone wants to tell me something that happened that it is very important for them to say then that's fine, but what I really want you to do in about a minute, is I really would love you to write me down something about somebody, your brothers or your sisters and some of the feelings that you have about them. Do you think you could do that?

Child: How is your love life?

Teacher: How is your love life? Ha, ha.

Child: How about yourself?

Teacher: Yes, you can write about yourself. How about you write about yourself and your brothers and sisters. I would love to know some of your feelings about your brothers and sisters.

Child: How about your great-grandfather who died?

Teacher: Yes, you can write about your great-grandfather who died. Certainly.

Child: Everything always happens to me.

Teacher: Does it?

Child: I fell into the table, I had a gash with all blood all over.

other times. For obviously the habit of writing meaningfully in a daily journal can in the long run be much more valuable for the student than the limited number of class lessons in poetry.

Teacher: Well, why don't you write that. Why don't you write that, Dear. But, I want you to write about the feelings. I'd like you to pick, excuse me.... I'd like you to pick your brothers.... Boys and girls, excuse me.... everybody please.... I'd like you to write something about any feeling that you have about your brother or your sister. You don't have to write about both of them, if you have more than one.

Child: Are you gonna keep this?

Teacher: I'd like to keep them.

Child: Can you write about your brother with somebody else?

Teacher: Yes, certainly. Your brother with somebody else.... Okay, does everybody understand? Listen, if you have something important that you want to write about yourself, please write about that first and then write about your brother or your sister.

Children ....(inaudible)....

Teacher: Okay, does everybody understand? You want to get a paper? Well, go get a pencil. Yes, please start. Everybody start please.

Child: What can I write?

Teacher: Write about a feeling, any feeling that you have about your brother or your sister. Any feeling.

These children have had perhaps one previous lesson in poetry, therefore, they do not yet have a good understanding of what is being asked of them. Also, in a sense, writing is a very direct means of communication. Children are reluctant to write down how they really feel until they feel secure with the teacher. Consequently, it is less threatening to shift the responsibility back to the teacher and force her to tell them what to write.

The customary practice of grading also enters into this situation. One child asks if the teacher will keep the writing. Regardless of how we as teachers try to rationalize grades in a positive light, the fact is that children view them as a negative practice. Of course, they are pleased when they receive a good grade, but they know it is only a temporary reprieve--the threat of future failure is always present. Therefore, a feeling of distrust pervades all their school activities, the feeling that it will be held against them if they do poorly, or, as in the present case, if they write how they <u>really</u> feel. Thus, they view with suspicion the teacher's request that they write about anything they feel strongly about. They are not yet ready for such freedom, and

Child: How about someone else you know, like my best friend's father just passed away.

Teacher: Yes, okay.

Teacher: Thank you, Dean. Excuse me.... Did you hear what Dean said? He said, could he write about his best friend's father who just passed away. Now look, always when you have, always when we're writing, I could tell you one thing to write but, if you have something in mind, something important or if you suddenly get a feeling that you want to write about, your grandmother or your grandfather or somebody you have great feeling for, please do it.

Children: ....(inaudible)....

Teacher: Okay, you've got a brother, write about him.

Child: He's got two of them.

Teacher: Okay.

Child: His twin brother and his other brother.

Teacher: Okay.... let's everybody write. Okay?

Children: ....(inaudible)....

Teacher: Do you have a feeling about somebody? A strong feeling about anybody?... Boys and girls, it doesn't have to be a good feeling. It could be maybe a bad feeling or a good feeling. Any kind of feeling. Anybody you have a feeling about.

it is sometimes a chore for the teacher to convince them that she can be trusted not to double cross them.

Child: Anybody got a eraser?

Teacher: You don't need an eraser, honey, just cross it out. Just cross it out. You don't need it. Okay?

Child: When my sister was pregnant, I died.

Teacher: Why did you die when your sister was pregnant, why?

Child: I don't even got a sister.

Child: You do too, you have two.

Child: Not that's pregnant.

Child: Oh, no joke.

Teacher: Was your sister pregnant or are you making that up?

Children: ....(inaudible)....

Child: Can I write about the future?

Teacher: You want to write in the future? Alright, if you have a feeling about the future you can write about it.

Child: I'm gonna drop dead.

Teacher: You're gonna drop dead! Oh, God, I hope not. I'm sure you won't.

Child: You see, I have this cat....

Teacher: You have a cat, yeah?

In creative writing we cannot expect all the children to immediately go to work in the same manner. Some must think awhile, observe what their neighbors are doing, walk around, chat, go sit against the wall, lie down, stand up and look for a better place, etc. We should expect this, in fact, given the freedom of a MOPPET room, if such activity did not go on we might legitimately wonder if the children are taking the thing seriously. As we know, many of the best writers find the initial getting started each day to be the worst problem they face. We can hardly expect more of children.

Child: It's my sister's, my big sister Dee's and she's twenty and it's real senile.

Teacher: What, the cat is senile?

Child: Yeah, when.... he always jumps and whenever I let him out, well, I say go drop dead.

Teacher: What do you say to him?

Child: Go drop dead because....

Teacher: I can't understand what you said, Karen. What do you say to the cat when he goes out?

Child: My mother says, "Go let the cat out." So we all hate him.

Teacher: You hate the cat?

Child: Yeah, he's real mean. He bit me.

Teacher: Right.

Child: And so I told him go drop dead because he bit me so bad.

Teacher: Oh, you said go drop dead because he bit you. Yeah.

Child: So he comes back in and he keeps on biting me because I said that.

Teacher: No, you know something. I betcha and I mean I know, he doesn't bite you.... he doesn't understand what you said.

Child: He like scratches me.

Teacher: But he doesn't do that because you said drop dead. Saying something doesn't make it happen just because you say something, that doesn't make it happen.

Child: You want to bet? Everytime I go to my cat... come here Mouse, he always comes.

Teacher: Yeah, but that's because maybe she reacts to the tone of your voice. But, if you say, if you say to the cat go drop dead....

Child: It will drop dead.

Teacher: No. You can't make something happen just by saying it or thinking it.

Child: My sister's friend said to her sister, go drop dead and she dropped dead.

Teacher: No, well, wait a minute. Excuse me.... Did you hear what Karen said? Boys and girls could we... could I have your attention for a minute. Something very important was just said. We were talking about when you say something, can you make it happen cause you say it. Now she said, like she says go drop dead to the cat who bites her and then the cat comes back in and scratches her because she said go drop dead to him.

Children: (giggling)

Teacher: Now, now wait, now listen that's just a way she feels. She feels that way, but do you all understand that just because you say something you can't make it happen. That, now....then... she just finished telling me about her girlfriend who told her little sister.... Was it her little sister?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: To go drop dead and the little sister dropped dead. Now, do you think the little sister died....What?

Child: In a few minutes.

Teacher: No, do you think the sister died because the friend said drop dead to her?

Children: (All together) No.

Teacher: No, Honey, you can't make something happen just by saying it. You're not magic. We're not magic.

Child: I am.

Teacher: You're magic?

Child: Yup, yup, I can pull a nickle out of yer ears.

Teacher: Wait, I can't hear him. What if a monster came in your house?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: I'm sorry I can't hear him. Yeah?

Child: ....(inaudible)....

Teacher: You said, I wish a monster came in here and a monster came in here. Well, you do know what the word.... there's no such thing as a monster. Do you know what the word coinc....

Children: Yes there is. Yes there is.

Teacher: Is there?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Maybe a feeling.

Child: A tronasaurus or a .....saurus.

Teacher: Groovy, spell it the way it sounds. Did you figure out how to spell pregnant too.

Children: P-R-E-G-E-N-T P-R-O-T.....(inaudible)....

Teacher What?

Child: You pulled a nickel off my ear and it was my ear.

Child: You pulled a quarter off my ear and it was my ear. You aren't gonna keep my quarter.

Teacher: Oh, you mean it was magic.

Child: How do you spell hospital?

As was the case in the previous lesson, "Clouds," the EXPERIENCE in this lesson contains considerable chatter. Again we point out that if the acoustics are good such talk is not disturbing.

Teacher: How do you think you spell it? Sound it out.

Child: H-O-S-P-T-A-I-L

Teacher: Well, that's close enough. Go ahead.

Children: ....(inaudible)....

Teacher: Um, boys and girls let me tell you something about spelling. Don't worry about it. Let me see yours. Can I read it out loud?

Child: I don't care.

Teacher: "One day my Grandma was real sick and when I go over her house sometimes she holds your hand and pinches you. Then on Christmas Day, she died and I had a cold but when I was better, I felt really sad and my father and mother did so much."

Teacher: Your father and mother did so much. What do you mean. Felt sad or did so much?

Child: Yeah, because she was my father's mother.

Teacher: You know....excuse me...you know what you did. You know what this is? This is the beginning of a poem. This is so beautiful. Your real feelings are in it. That's so beautiful. It's really beautiful.

Child: Oh, you should see mine.

Gradually all the children get into the spirit of writing.

Teacher: Can I read them out loud? Can I read yours out loud, Bobby?.... Boys and girls, let me ask you something? Would you like me to collect them and read them without saying whose they are?

Child: No, no. I want you to say mine.

Teacher: I see, okay. You want me to say who you are. Okay.... "One day I was over to my cousin's and we were playing. He has a bar and I was climbing up and I hit my head"... and I hit my head is that?

Child: Whole.

Teacher: "and my whole head was blood all over me and I had to get 22 stitches and that's it." That's good, Bob.

Child: Look at this one. Read mine.

Teacher: "When I heard my sister was pregnant I died because I was in the middle of one of my groovy dates." (laughter) Okay.

Child: That's all I could think of.

Child: How did you spell died?

Teacher: Is there anybody else who would like me to read theirs.

Child: I know, I want you to.

Teacher: Okay, just a second.

Child: D-I-E-D

Child: D-I-E-D

Teacher: D-I-E-D

Child: D-I-E-D

Teacher: Right. If there's anybody else who would like me to read theirs.

Child: Do we get to keep them?

Teacher: Couldn't I keep them? I'd love to have them, unless if you want a copy for yourself, you can. Do you have extra paper? Get some extra paper.

Child: Make a copy of mine.

Teacher: Alright.

Child: I'm gonna hang it up in my room.

Teacher: Are you?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Okay. Should I read it out loud?

Child: No.

Teacher: Oh, wow, that's terrific. Put your name on that. That's wonderful. Oh, I see, good. Very good,

Teacher: Honey. Very nice. I won't read it.

Child: A love story. ooooh....

Teacher: Should I read it out loud? "When I was born I almost died. I was very sick. My sister always gets me mad because she....," excuse me.... I'm reading somebody's paper now. "My sister," excuse me.... "my sister always gets me mad because she doesn't do her counters and I have to do them. I wish I was my brother, Joey, 'cause he gets everything and I get nothing." Hey, you know what? I think this becomes a poem. Could I read that? Listen, yes, listen to what Kelly wrote. I think this is a poem. "I wish," listen, "I wish I was my brother, Joey because he gets everything and I get nothing." You know, I would just leave out the word because. Should I read it without the word because in it? Because in poetry, you have to learn what to leave out so that the concentration is on the whole thing. You want to hear it now? This is just beautiful. "I wish I was my brother, Joey. He gets everything and I get nothing." And I think I'd leave out and too. I'll try it again, "I wish I was my brother, Joey. He gets everything, I get nothing." That's terrific. "My brother always gets the easy jobs around the house." I love this. This becomes a poem. Just wonderful. Good for you. Good for you.

Child: Say my name with it.

Teacher: Well, your name isn't on it.

Reading the poems out loud is one of the most crucial parts of the lesson. This is where the children find out if the teacher really has consideration for them. It will be noted that the teacher never makes negative comments, even if the writing is poor. If a child does not want a poem read she does not pressure the child to allow her to read it.

The reader will observe that when the teacher does get a chance to read something of substantial length and substance, she does not criticize it. Nor does she draw comparisons--this is good, that is bad. Instead she looks for something good in the poem and concentrates on that. To improve the poem she usually suggests things that can be done to help. In the present case she suggests subtracting the nonessentials.

Child: Frank.

Teacher: Okay, Frank. Well, okay.

Child: Sh...listen to it. Alright, go ahead. And it doesn't become no poem. Read it out loud.

Teacher: Alright. "I kissed my mother, I dropped dead luckily because she was going to hug me. Thank God."

Children: (Some giggles.)

Child: Here, read mine.

Teacher: Wait a minute. You know what? Would you do me a favor?

Child: What?

Teacher: I think you have a poem on the other side, but it's scribbled out. Would you write it again underneath. That's a poem right here about your great-grandfather.

Child: I don't wanna write. I don't wanna write about it.

Teacher: Please. Well, then can I just have it. Let me have the whole thing. Thanks..... Dean, do you want me to read yours out loud?

Child: And my broken...(inaudible)... got 'er.

Teacher: No, that's alright.... Anybody, excuse me, anybody who wants a copy of what they wrote so that

As time goes on, the children become less reluctant to have their poems read. As Leland Jacobs has observed, there is a great need for dignifying the work of children through showing positive appreciation. Children naturally respond to it. While granting the necessity at times for criticism, we hold that such a stern measure is in most circumstances inferior to the dynamic force of positive encouragement.

Teacher: they can have a copy can take their paper.... "One day my fa... my friend's father was in the hospital"..... Who didn't know it, Dean? Your friend didn't know it?

Dean: No, he didn't know that he was real sick.

Teacher: Oh!

Children: (Chorus) Ah! Ah!

Teacher: Boys and girls, make yourself a copy. Make yourself a copy of what you wrote so that you can keep it and I can keep it. Okay?..... Dean, did you want me to read it, did you say?

Dean: Yeah, you can read it.

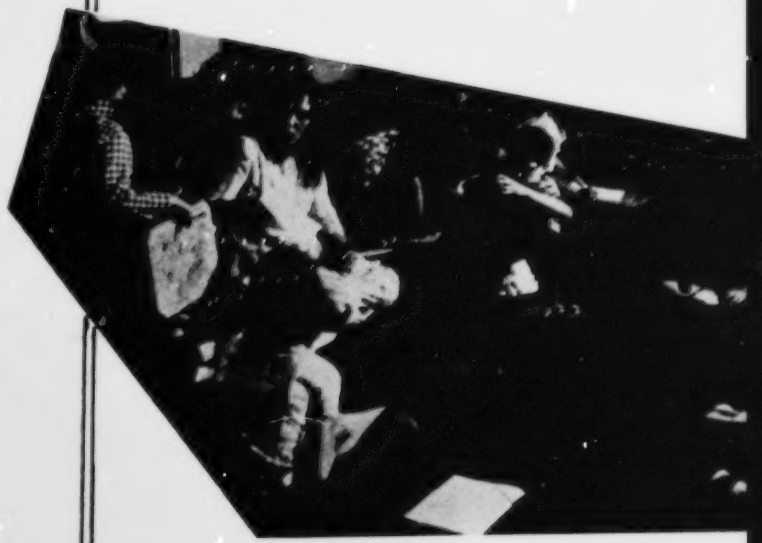
Teacher: "One day my friend's father who was in the hospital and he didn't know it....he died in the morning. I didn't know but my mother told me. I felt sad. I tried to make him forget."

Child: Don't read mine out loud.

Teacher: Alright, I won't.... You know what? This... this is a poem, too. I won't read it out loud. Put your name on it.

Child: Ah, your grandfather got....

Teacher: Hey, excuse me, we don't do that. If somebody wants to keep something private, we keep it private. Alright? No, please don't do that.



Child: He tells us when we're going to school.

Teacher: Well, that's alright but you....you know something, you're entitled, excuse me, but you're entitled to privacy when you want privacy.

Child: You want me to write another one?

Teacher: It's up to you. I'd love you to, if you want.

Child: There's no paper.

Teacher: Here's paper..... You know sometimes people feel like sharing and sometimes they don't. Okay? And that's up to them.

Child: I'm not gonna share with you.

Teacher: Well, that's alright. You don't have to share anything.

Child: I won't give you half of my cupcake.

Children: (Giggles)

Teacher: If you want to be sure, write another one.

Child: Maybe, maybe half my Twinkie but not my cupcake.

Teacher: Half your Twinkie but not half your cupcake?

Child: Laurie, Laurie, you've been a runnin' over this.

Teacher: Okay, well, she didn't mean to. Okay?

It is well known that English is a frightfully difficult language from the standpoint of logic: the written language differs in many ways from the spoken one. The rules of grammar are full of exceptions, the same sound may be spelled many different ways, composition requires judgement and taste as well as technical knowledge, etc., etc. Consequently, the mastery of reading and more particularly of writing becomes in the long run a monumental task requiring patience and--motivation. Therefore, it seems logical to concentrate on imbuing children with a love for reading and writing as the surest guarantee that they will pursue with enthusiasm the long term goal of developing good language skills.

Child: We need more paper.

Teacher: You could ask.... wait, wait, wait.....

Child: Is that on tape?

Teacher: Yeah, because I just wanted to keep some of the things you said.

Children: Did you tape what I said?....How about 853. .... On tape, you got us?

Teacher: Is that tape still moving?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Alright.... Should I read it out loud?

Child: (Emphatically) NO!

Teacher: I don't have to.

Child: Presenting the king.

Teacher: That's very nice. Boys and girls, excuse me, would you please go away from that.

Child: No.

Teacher: Should I read it out loud?

Child: Yes.

Teacher: "I wish I was my brother Allen. He works in a gas station and he gets a lot of money each week and I only get two dollars for working in the

To adhere slavishly to the concepts of correctness can only end in turning the pursuit of reading and writing into an onerous chore for most children. Further, even though children may score well in tests in reading and writing, this is no guarantee that they will pursue learning any further when the pressures of school are finally lifted from them.

Teacher: station." You mean you just get two dollars?

Child: I want to read my poem in here.

Teacher: No, es.....

Child: Can I read my poem in here?

Teacher: Oh, alright, you can. Go ahead.

Child: It doesn't work, does it?

Teacher: I don't know if it does. Do you want to read your poem?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Go ahead.

Child: Flick the switch.

Teacher: By all means, read it..... No, he wants to, let him. I don't know if there will be time for that but he can read his. Go ahead.

Child: (Whispers) Wait. No.

Teacher: Want me to read it for you? It's up to you. It's really up to you. You're in charge of it.

Child: Okay.

Child: I'm in charge of my poem.

Teacher: You want me to read it?

Many teachers feel that false praise breeds a kind of false reality among students, and they are right. However, it must be observed in MOPPET that we do not advocate false praise--we merely refrain from unnecessary criticism. What we advocate is positive support. For example, the fact that a child attempts to write a poem at all is sufficient to merit at least a neutral teacher response ("alright" or something like that) even if the poem is very poor. The main objective in these early stages should be that the child maintain interest and try again.

In the case of a better poem, the constructive elements of instruction can be injected by concentrating on the best aspects of the work. The child knows without being told that the ignored part is not so good, but by concentrating on the best part the child emerges with a positive orientation. The fact is that the traditional practice of pointing out the good and bad is likely to produce a 50-50 response in children, rather than the much needed wholely positive feeling.

Child: Uh, I'm gonna read it.

Teacher: Alright, go ahead. You read it.

Child: Hello.

Teacher: Shh.....

Child: My uncle got run over by a train. I felt so sad. I loved him very much. His name is Bobby. He was my father's brother.

Child: (Whispering) My father's brother.

Child: Oh, I was crying.

Teacher: And you know what? That becomes a poem. Do you know why that becomes a poem?..... Because all your feelings.... It isn't? Would you put your name on yours, please?

Child: Let me tell a poem now.

Teacher: Wait a minute.

Children: (Mixed sounds.)

Teacher: Excuse me.

Children: (More mixed noises.)

Teacher: Okay, but you know what, Karen? But, that didn't make it happen.... Hoped it was broken and when he got there it was broken.

If one examines closely the present lesson, it is unlikely that much can be found that would contribute to the formation of false values. On the contrary, it is a lesson that faces life's hardest realities head-on and attempts in a positive manner to raise that reality to the level of art. The fact that this lesson is conducted in a rather uneven manner is due to the immaturity of the children. The teacher would use the same basic approach in graduate school, except that the lesson would likely progress so smoothly that we would miss the similarity.

Child: It could have happened.

Teacher: Yeah, I know that but, but just 'cause she said it, that didn't make it happen, 'cause she said it. It was broken 'cause it got broken.... You know what I'm saying. Just because she said, I hope it's broken, that doesn't make it break.

Child: Let me tell something in that.

Child: How do you spell operator?

Teacher: Um, just the way it sounds. Okay,.... Boys and girls, um, could I have all your papers please because it's almost time to go.

Children: (Mumbling excitedly)

Child: I gotta still copy it.

Teacher: I'm sorry.... Let me have it, Honey.

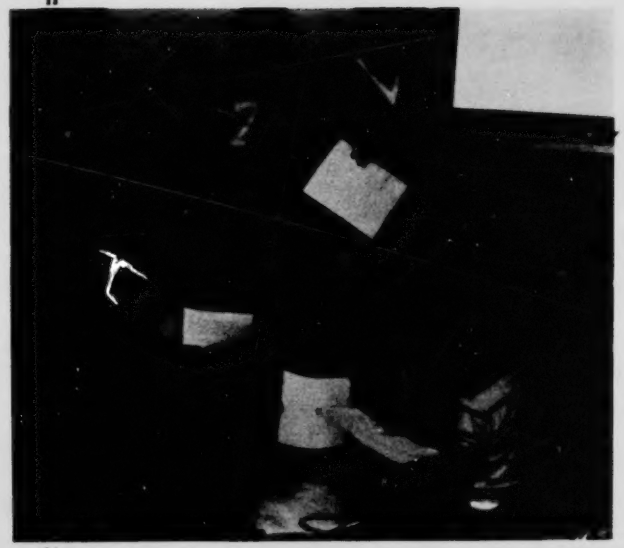
Child: I'm gonna tell the thing I wrote in there.

Teacher: Did I read it in there already?

Child: Yeah.

Child: (Very loud and very close to microphone) I love you very much. I know you are dead.

Teacher: Good for you. Wait, do you hear what Kelly did? She rewrote it. Remember when she said "I wish my brother, Joey," she rewrote it and she took out <u>because</u> and she took out <u>and</u>. Now look, "I wish I was my..." let me show you something.



Teacher: I wasn't going to do this today, but I'm going to do it. Look everybody, look, "I wish I was my brother, Joey," Now look I would write it like this. I, you say it to me, Kelly.

Kelly: I wish I was my brother, Joey.

Teacher: Now look....you see how I'm writing it. That's how you write a poem. And I'm writing it the way she's saying it. "I wish I was my brother, Joey".... go ahead, Honey.

Kelly: He gets everything.

Teacher: "He gets everything." Right.

Kelly: I get nothing.

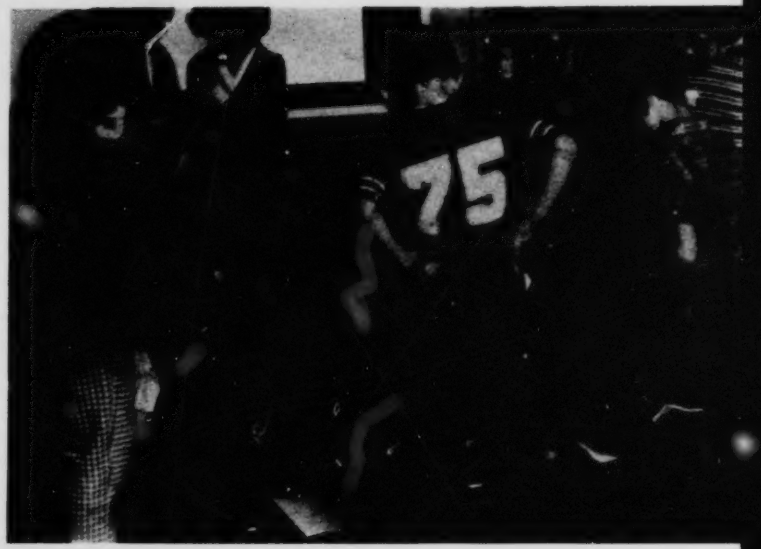
Teacher: Oh, "I get nothing." Now look at that. Now look at the way it looks on the page. I wish is the first line, I was is the second line, my brother Joey is the third line, he gets everything is the fourth line, I get nothing is the fifth line. That's beautiful.

I wish
I was
My brother Joey
He gets everything
I get nothing.

Child: Can I read mine?

Teacher: Yes, alright. Go ahead.

In the present lesson it will be observed that the teacher does bring in a certain amount of technical instruction. But, as is illustrated in Kelly's poem, it is brought in as it appears to be needed. Since Kelly went to the trouble of rewriting her poem, it became obvious that she was ready to take another step forward, which the teacher provided for by explaining how a poem is customarily written on a page.



Children: (A lot of mumbling.)

Teacher: Shh.... Excuse me, don't do that because we won't be able to hear him.

Child: Uh, uh, when I heard my sister was pregnant, I died because I was in the middle of one of my groovy dates.

Teacher: Very nice. Thank you, Honey.

Child: Let me read mine.

Teacher: Go ahead, find yours and you can read it..... Didn't I read yours already? Uh, if I didn't read yours or you want to read it.... You don't want to read yours? Okay. That's very nice, Jim. Thank you very much... Did I read that already, Kelly?

Kelly: Yeah.

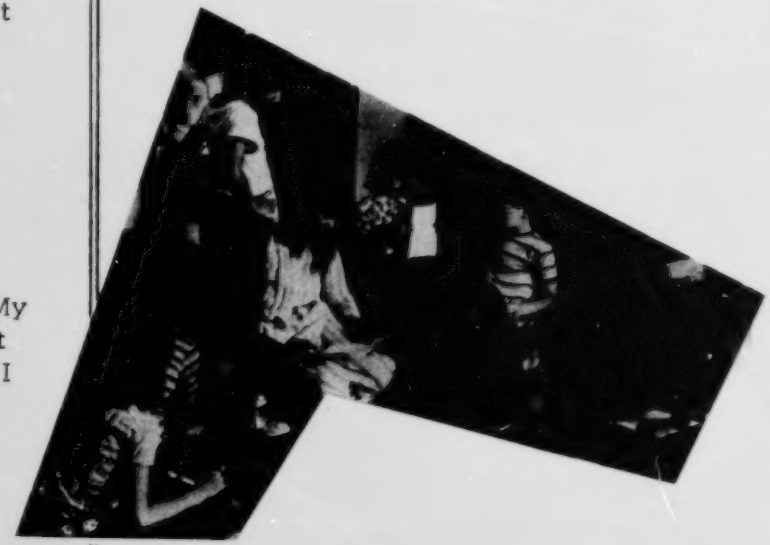
Teacher: Okay.

Child: I was born, I almost died. I was very sick. My sister always gets me mad because she doesn't do her counters and I have to do them. I wish I was my brother, Joey. He gets everything. I get nothing. My brother always gets the easy jobs around the house.

Teacher: Oh, very nice.

Child: I'm gonna read it.

In the traditional approach to teaching poetry, the cart was usually gotten too far ahead of the horse; i.e. the techniques used by poets were given precedence over the basic reason for writing poetry in the first place--which is to express the feelings with the ultimate depth of meaning. With the technical approach most children were turned away from poetry, rather than won over to it.



Teacher: Go ahead, read it.

Child: I don't want anybody to hear it.

Teacher: Then don't read it. They're gonna hear you, Honey. Are you going to read the one about your grandfather?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Okay, I'd like everybody to be quiet because this is a very important poem. So, I'd like everybody quiet. Go ahead.

Child: My great-grandfather. My great-grandfather died. I was sad and I was eight.

Teacher: Go ahead.

Child: And I cried.

Teacher: Okay. You want to read it again?

Child: No.

Teacher: Okay. Very good. That is a poem because your feelings, your honest feelings... Boys and girls, when you tell the truth and you really say your feelings, usually you get a poem.... okay. Is there anybody else who I didn't read theirs? Well, excuse me,.... Did I read everybody's? Can I read yours out loud?

Child: No.

In order to formulate rules for an art, the art must necessarily be generalized in the manner of a craft. The rules regulating the practice of a craft necessarily must be devised after the craft itself has been sufficiently well developed so that the resulting rules make sense. But it must be remembered that the art itself was developed in a natural manner, whereas the rules of craftsmanship were developed later.

However, the rules are usually laid down by analytical scholars. Their objective is, of course, standardization, hence greater efficiency. Frequently they don't stop with developing rules, but they also devise the pedagogy for teaching those rules. Unfortunately, such pedagogy represents the logic of the scholar--who is looking back on the learning process. Whereas, the child represents the neophyte who is looking forward without any of the scholar's alien scale of values. If anything attracts the child it is almost always the art itself, not the rules of craft governing it.

This is the crux of the problem: the teacher needs to achieve the scholars insight, but he/she also must preserve an understanding and appreciation of the child's viewpoint. Since the child is the one who is embarking on the learning pro-

Teacher: Should I read yours?

Child: No.

Teacher: No, okay.

Child: I'll read it.

Teacher: Huh.

Child: I want to read it.

Teacher: Yes, go ahead, Laurie, read yours..... I'd like to get everybody's.....

Child: I'd like to read mine.

Teacher: Okay, go ahead, Dear.

Child: I'm gonna blow my stack.

Teacher: Go ahead, Dear, read it.

Child: My brother's hand....

Teacher: Just let her read without saying anything, okay?.... I have to have it quiet otherwise I can't hear, okay?

Children: Shh... shh.....

Child: My brother's hand. He had a wire and his hand...he put the wire, wait. My brother's hand. He had a wire and he put it in a, what do you call it when you plug in something?

cess, the child's point of view must necessarily be given precedence over that of the scholar. If the teacher succeeds in encouraging the child to progress far enough, the occasions will arise where more and more of the scholar's technical information may be taught. Eventually the young learner's work may be subjected to a careful, specific kind of criticism, but--never, never in the early stages.

Teacher: An electric outlet.

Child: An electricity outlet.

Teacher: An electrical outlet, yeah.

Child: An electricity outlet. And went in a ambulance and was, uh, un... uncons... unconscious and said he is the King. He plugged in a wire, a wire in whatever you call it and it lit up and his hand was all burned.

Teacher: Oh my God. Is he alright now?

Child: Your little brother?

Teacher: Excuse me, is there anybody who would like me to read theirs that I didn't read?

Children: (Altogether) You read mine.... You didn't read this part.

Teacher: Excuse me, don't do that please..... "I think I was six when my mother gave me a cat. My cousins were in Germany and we went to pick them up at the airport. When we came back, the cat had kittens. I was very happy. In March we had to get rid of my cat because my brother was allergic to her. I felt very, very, very sad. I started crying and crying." Ah, okay, that's very good.

Child: Here, read mine.

This is the basic reasoning behind the MOPPET approach to criticism and the teaching of skills and content. A love for the art is given precedence over the rules of craft. The same is true of any subject area: a love for the subject itself is given precedence over the memorization of content or the development of skills.

This explanation may make it clear to readers why many of the devices of poetry (rhyming, meter, etc.) have not even been mentioned in the present lesson. This is an early poetry lesson. The children do not yet have the ability to deal constructively with highly sophisticated technical devices. If they are asked to do so too soon, in the effort to comply they commonly lose sight of the real poetry. Thus in their efforts to be structurally correct they become separated from the heart of the matter. Small wonder that poetry as it has been taught in this country has resulted in a population that rarely reads poetry (especially serious poetry).

Teacher: Did I read it yet? Did I read it already? Now wait a minute, Honey. I wanna just.... I want to see everybody's paper who I didn't see. Just a minute..... John, could you come here a minute? .... What does this say, Dear? My what?

John: My brother.

Teacher: My brother is what, a what?.... Just read it for me, Honey. Just read it..... Huh, John, here you read it. Read it on the microphone. Okay, John, you feel like it?

Children: (Encouraging John)

John: No.

Teacher: You don't want to? Okay....

- Bette Distler -

The third lesson is a fifth grade creative drama lesson "Environments." Since creative drama lessons employ dialogue more or less constantly, it is possible to conceive of the INTERACTION as taking place throughout. However, this continuity of dialogue does not change the fact that the lessons functionally contain the three main parts of a MOPPET lesson: INPUT, INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE.

The present lesson, "Environments," uses lesson Form B. For the purposes of organization it is divided into three parts. Parts I and II contain the INPUT and INTERACTION, which are done simultaneously as in "Clouds." These activities prepare the children for Part III, the EXPERIENCE.

GRADE - FIFTH AND SIXTH

ENVIRONMENTS

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson the student will be able to:

Develop imagination through translating media images into settings used for scenes.

Identify realistic environments that could be used as settings for a play.

Identify imaginary environments that can be used as setting for a play.

EQUIPMENT

- 2 Overhead projectors
- 2 Projection screens
- Drum, mallet or tambourine

MATERIALS

- MOPPET Kit:

  Five transparencies, created by placing construction paper cut-outs on transparency:

  Straight, horizontal line
  Curved line
  Zig-zag line
  Two abstract patterns

LESSON SCHEME

INPUT	INTERACTION	EXPERIENCE
	Ask the students to recall the setting of a story that they recently read. Discuss the fact that the setting of a story could also be the environment used as a setting for a play. Students might indicate settings such as woods, farm, train station, lake, bedroom, house and playground.	
Project the transparency of the horizontal line.	Ask the students to think about places the image might represent. Answers might include a road, a lake and shore, a window, the horizon of the sky as it meets the ground a sidewalk. Ask: "What kind of feeling or mood does this environment project?" Possible answers will be: boring, monotonous, plain, still.	
Project the transparency of the curved line.		

LESSON SCHEME (Continued)

INPUT	INTERACTION	EXPERIENCE
Project the transparency of the zig-zag line.	Ask: "What environments might be represented by this image?" Answers might be: the mountains, the seashore, a road, a rollercoaster, etc. Ask: "What kind of feeling or mood is projected by this image?" Answers might be: fun, happy, adventurous, exciting. Ask: "What settings are you reminded of when you view an environment image like this?" Answers might include: lightning, airplanes, haunted house, sky, mountains, Indian village.	Ask the students to join in a moving experience, with everyone working at once. Suggest that the students find a free-standing space within the room.

LESSON SCHEME (Continued)

INPUT	INTERACTION	EXPERIENCE
Play various rhythms on the percussion instrument.		With the teacher playing a 4/4 rhythm, ask the students to move in a straight line.
	After the experience with each rhythm, ask the students to describe the environment they imagined themselves to be in as they moved in different patterns. Discuss what kind of character they pretended to be.	With the teacher playing a different rhythm, ask the students to move in a curved line.
	Answers will vary: "I was an Indian in a war camp." "I was in the jungle, the ocean, down at the seashore, etc."	On the third rhythm, the students will move in a zig-zag line.
Introduce two abstract patterns on the overhead projector.		Divide the class into groups of three people. Ask each group to choose one of the transparencies to be the image for an imagined environment that will represent the setting in the scene to be acted out.

LESSON SCHEME (Continued)

INPUT	INTERACTION	EXPERIENCE
	Ask each group to plan the scene to be acted out. After choosing the image, the group should plan a scene which communicates the following: where the scene takes place, who the characters are, why they are in the scene, what crisis or problem they are faced with, how the problem is solved.	After an eight minute planning session, each group will act out the scene it has decided on.
	Through divergent questioning procedures, critique each scene with the class. Possible questions are the following: "What part of the scene worked best for you?" "What was the most believable part of the scene?" "What pieces of action or dialogue communicated the nature of the scene?" "If the scene were reenacted, what information would you like answered?"	

- Anne Battle -

FIFTH GRADE CREATIVE DRAMA LESSON "ENVIRONMENTS"

Transcript

Teacher: Will you sit down in a circle please? This morning we're going to talk about the use of environments in drama as they represent the setting. From what you know, and have discussed in your own room, how would you say a setting is used in a short story? What do you think the setting might be in the short story....Nick?.....

Nick: It might be a forest.

Teacher: Alright, it might be a forest. What else might be the setting in a short story?

Child: Walking down a street in like New York.

Teacher: A street in a city like New York. Okay, any other ideas on what you think the setting might be in a short story?.....Pete....

Pete: A building.

Teacher: A building? What kind of a building?

Child: Like a house.

Teacher: Like a house, okay.

Child: Somebody cutting down wood.

Comments & Pictures

As in the previous two lessons in art and poetry, this lesson also has an introductory dialogue to give children a frame of reference for the media visuals that will follow. Pages 1-5 are taken up with this introductory phase.

Teacher: A setting that describes somebody cutting down wood? Like a tree?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Okay, where might the tree be located?

Child: In the woods.

Teacher: In the woods, or by a house, okay. Those are all settings and I'm sure you will think of others as we go around, let's go around in a circle. We can think of some other kinds of settings. I'll give you a second to think about a different kind of setting which has not been described. And then we'll go around in a circle and you just say anything....that um....comes into your mind that represents a setting for a story or play. Okay, let's start here.

Child: A light.

Teacher: A light, okay.

Child: A person in a lonely place.

Teacher: A person in a lonely place. So what would be the setting?

Child: The lonely place.

Teacher: The lonely place, alright. What might the lonely place be?

Child: In your bedroom.

The reader will perceive that each of the three MOPPET teachers observed thus far has a distinct style. The creative drama teacher, Anne Battle, uses the device of repeating each child's response in order to promote clarity and to make sure that each is heard, since many children answer very softly. Such devices are a matter of personal teacher preference, and many are probably unconscious. Teachers are not encouraged to imitate the MOPPET teachers, because this can lead to a dependence on style and manner. The main point to be remembered is not the personal style of the teacher, but rather the effective carrying out of the basic function in each part of the lesson.

This introductory dialogue is in the divergent mode. The discussion need not be used to extract the last possible response out of the children; therefore, it can be comparatively brief. However, it does serve a very important function and cannot be safely omitted. We have found that the impact and value of visual presentations can be lost and the success of the entire lesson jeopardized if the children are not prepared to focus their attention on the presentation.

Teacher: A bedroom, okay, good. Alright.

Child: People on a ship?

Teacher: Alright, a ship..... Patty?

Child: A store.

Teacher: A store.....Cleo.

Cleo: A park.

Teacher: A park.....

Child: If you're in a airplane.

Teacher: Alright, the inside of an airplane.

Child: The inside of a train.

Teacher: The inside of train, okay.

Child: Being scared!

Teacher: Being scared. You're the person being scared. Where's the place that you're scared? Where are you when you're scared?

Child: In a ghost movie.....in a haunted house.

Teacher: Then a haunted house would be the setting for the story or the play about your being frightened.

Child: Swimming in a swimming pool.

Teacher: Alright, a swimming pool.

Child: A car.

Creative drama is a very complex art to teach to the normal size class. Many drama teachers much prefer to work with small groups of not more than 6 or 7 children. However, this procedure is impractical for classroom teachers working inside the regular school day. Therefore, a method is needed which will make it possible to successfully teach drama to regular classes. Anne Battle has done this through devising a flexible structure that will enable teachers to cope with most of the major problems caused by large groups.

The basic problem involved in teaching creative drama is the tendency toward disruptive behavior. The genesis of this tendency is the reality that drama involves a great degree of exposure of the person--physically, emotionally and mentally. Therefore, children disguise their feelings of inadequacy through silliness, obstinacy, pretending to be bored, etc. However, underneath this surface behavior lies the very positive fact that children almost invariably have a real desire to do drama. The problem, then, is not lack of desire on the part of the children, but rather the need for supportive activities that will enable children to enter into the drama experience with confidence. The format used in this lesson is only one of many that are possible, but the reader should be aware that regardless of the exact order or nature of the activities, the basic need of the children for proper preparation and support must be met.

Teacher: The inside of a car, okay, yes.....

Child: Someone painting in school....in a classroom.

Teacher: An environment that shows someone painting in a classroom.

Child: Drawing.

Teacher: Say it again.

Child: Drawing.

Teacher: Being drunk?

Child: No....drawing!

Teacher: Oh, drawing (laughs) okay. Alright, drawing would be the action of the character in the scene. Where would he be drawing?

Child: In a art school.

Teacher: In an art school. So the art school would be the setting. Okay.

Child: In an underground tunnel.

Teacher: An underground tunnel.

Child: A fort.

Teacher: A fort.

Child: In the country.

Teacher: In the country?....Okay, let's go on.

There is a need for the creation of especially meaningful and memorable experiences in the curriculum. Children need them to refresh their mental apparatus and renew their interest. MOPPET lessons can fulfill this function if teachers will take the time and concern to make sure that the lessons succeed.

We would like to emphasize this point about the time involved in MOPPET lessons. There is no doubt that time is very important to teachers, and that they are pressured to get everything in. Yet, in reality, each kind of learning process has a rhythm that cannot be greatly interfered with: if we rush, a great deal is lost; if we slow down too much, we invite the waste caused by boredom. This is particularly true in regard to MOPPET lessons.

Child: Scared.

Teacher: Being scared?

Child: Yes.

Teacher: Being scared describes the way the character feels. Now, wherever would he be when he's being scared?

Child: Uh, in my house....My little sister's afraid.

Teacher: In your house? So the house would be the environment in which you're scared. Alright, Anthony.....Frank.....

Child: Me.

Teacher: Yes.

Child: I just had one....(long pause)

Teacher: Alright, we'll come back. I'll give you a chance to think about it and we'll come back....yes....

Child: A battlefield.

Anne: A battlefield, good.

Child: A skyscraper.

Teacher: A skyscraper.

Child: Like walking down the hall in a school?

Teacher: Alright, the hallway of the school.

The literature on creative people abounds with the many diverse ways in which individuals have gotten themselves into a condition to attempt the creative effort. In a school setting we obviously cannot go to extreme lengths to humor individuals. However, we must at the very least take the proper time and care to prepare the group.

Our experience contains many occasions where the MOPPET staff or teachers they were working with attempted to fit lessons into blocks of time that were just too short. Invariably the results were disappointing. In the case of creative drama lessons, they normally require approximately an hour to execute properly. If the class is large, it is best to plan on taking a little longer. If there isn't time to do the lesson properly, it is best to postpone it.

Child: Climbing up a mountain.

Teacher: The side of a mountain.

Child: A river.

Teacher: A river, okay.....You have come up with at least 20.....25 different places that could be the setting for a play or a story. I would like you now to look at the visuals that I'm going to put on the screen and as I put them up, I would like you to think about what you see, what kind of a setting do you see?.... Alright, we'll look at my visuals.... think of each as a possible environment for the setting in a play or story. What do you see?

Child: A window.

Teacher: A window....yes?

Child: A hallway.

Teacher: A hallway....what else?

Child: A dark alley.

Teacher: A dark alley.

Child: A road.

Teacher: A road.

Child: A sidewalk.

Teacher: A sidewalk.

The teacher has decided that the children are now ready for the visual presentation.

As can be observed above, the content of the environment created by the overhead visual is very meager; it is suggestive at best. Consequently the children must give meaning to it. Since they have been engaged in thinking up imaginary environments, the idea of giving a more definite definition to a vague shape is now only a problem of going one step further into the world of the imagination. Although vague, these environments are more concrete than those suggested in

Child: A place where there's a strip of paper.

Teacher: A place where there's a strip of paper?

Child: A bathroom.

Teacher: Alright.....yes.....Frank?

Frank: (Inaudible)

Teacher: You see a peak environment....alright...yes?

Child: A pipe from the cars.

Teacher: Say it again?

Child: A pipe.

Teacher: A pipe.

Child: Um....a pass.

Teacher: A pass....yes.

Child: Who me? A wall painted with black stripes on it.

Teacher: A wall in a room painted with a black stripe.

Child: A market.

Teacher: A market....okay...yes?

Child: A street.

Teacher: A street....yes.

the previous dialogue. Similar settings will be used later as the environments for dramatic episodes.

The mood as well as the shape of the environment is explored. In reality the visuals used in this lesson are very neutral. It will be seen that some children see them as happy, and others as gloomy. Material that lends itself to many varied interpretations is very desirable in creative drama.

In the previous poetry lesson we stated that good visuals create a tension between the familiar and the unfamiliar. In that lesson a film was used that employed two young brothers (familiar) and the peculiar (unfamiliar) practice of the older brother using song to communicate with his younger brother. In the present lesson the familiar ideas discussed in the opening dialogue are now contrasted with the very vague material in the visuals. Thus, there is again created this element of the unknown that cannot be accounted for in the easy familiar ways. The familiar element attaches itself to us, and then the element of the unknown challenges us to venture out into new experiences. How adventurous we ultimately become depends partly on the stage of development of our imaginative abilities, but it also probably depends upon our courage.

Child: An enemy line.

Teacher: An enemy line, yes....okay....what kind.... Now let me ask you....what kind of a mood or a feeling do you have from looking at this environment?

Children: Two different colors....loneliness?

Teacher: A feeling of loneliness. Oh, so the environment looks very lonely to you? The place looks very lonely.

Children: Yeah.

Anne: Yes.

Child: Two different colors.

Teacher: You see an environment with two different colors. You get the feeling of two different colors. What kind of a feeling does that make you have.... about this place?

Child: Strange.

Teacher: Like it's a strange place?

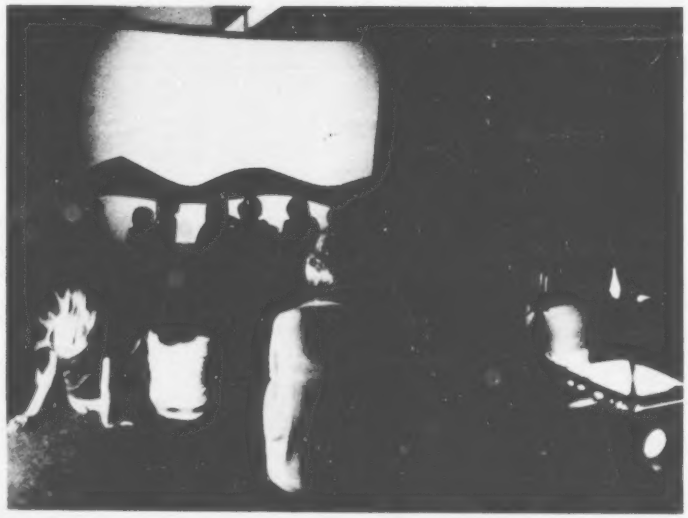
Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Yes?

Child: Like it's a ghost town.

Teacher: The feeling of it being a ghost town. What.... How do the rest of you feel?.....Yes?

Child: Looks deserted....like a deserted ship.



The reader will remember that in the previous art lesson, "Clouds," the imaginativeness of the dialogue responses tended to increase as the INTERACTION dialogue progressed. We strive to bring this about in the INTERACTION of each discipline. Thus, in the present case, the earlier "loneliness of the bedroom" and "ship" tend to be elaborated on and become "ghost town" and "deserted ship."

Teacher: It gives you the feeling of a deserted place, like a deserted ship. Okay,....yes?

Child: The feeling of danger.

Teacher: The feeling of danger....yes?

Child: An island that's empty.

Teacher: An island that's empty. So there's an emptiness about it?....Okay, let's look at this picture.... Alright, if this represents an environment....what kind of environment might it be?....Yes?

Child: Mountains.

Teacher: Mountainous....Yes?

Child: (inaudible)

Teacher: Alright, just a second. Kids, you're hearing some very exciting, different great ideas; but it's difficult to hear everybody....so please use your voice to share the ideas that you have about what you see....Alright would you tell it again?

Child: A grass field with a path going across it.

Teacher: A grass field with a path going across it....Yes?

Child: The waves in the ocean.

Teacher: Alright.....Yes?

The procedure resulting in improvisational drama makes great demands on the children, and therefore the teacher should not expect too much in the earliest lessons. One should not be too pessimistic either, even when the results are decidedly discouraging. The children must be given sufficient time to gradually master the complex elements involved.

Superficially it would appear that there are only two problems. The first is to invent a story, and the second is to improvise lines to convey it. In practice, however, the dramatic situation is much more involved, the child must: overcome shyness occasioned by a strange medium; keep in mind the pacing of the story line; respond to language and action of the other players; compensate for the failures to communicate of the other players; keep in mind those actions that are to be conveyed by pantomime and those that are to be conveyed by voice; overcome the physical awkwardness involved in thinking one's way through an imaginary situation; remember to speak loud enough to be heard by the audience; remember to simulate hitting, etc.

Since there are no rehearsals, written scripts, directors or other aids, the

Child: A roller coaster.

Teacher: A roller coaster....Yes?

Child: A bumpy road.

Teacher: A bumpy road....okay....Yes?

Child: Like the country with hills.

Teacher: The country with hills....okay.

Child: The mountains.

Teacher: The mountains....okay....any other feelings about what you see?

Child: Looks like someone....(inaudible)..... green background.

Teacher: Okay....What kind of a feeling does this environment have for you? If you were in it or looking at it, what kind of a feeling does it communicate?

Child: A happy feeling.

Teacher: A happy feeling?

Child: A scared oh...uh....a scared like....

Teacher: A scarey feeling?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Yes?

fledgling actor is asked for the kind of spontaneous performance that would tax the ability of a trained professional. Therefore, in the early lessons the teacher should be pleased whenever a group does passably well. As for the others, the teacher should be prepared to offer plenty of encouragement.

Teachers who are inexperienced in teaching drama are prone to blame their own lack of expertise when their early efforts go badly. They should remember that such a condition is normal, and that experienced drama teachers also frequently have difficulty with new students.

Child: Like a strange feeling.

Teacher: A strange feeling....any other ideas about the kind of feeling you get from looking at this?

Child: Like a scarey feeling, 'cause you're here to ....(inaudible).... think you have ghosts howling.

Teacher: Okay, ...alright....Will you look at this scene, this environment....what is it composed of....what are the elements that it's composed of? What is it made up of?

Child: Uh....black paper.

Teacher: Black paper....okay, what about, what about in contrast to the...(inaudible).... Let's look at the first one. What is it made up of?

Child: Some kind of black paper.

Teacher: Something that is black is used to make what? Like what?

Child: A film like.

Teacher: Like a film. What is it composed of?

Child: Black paper.

Teacher: Could be black paper. What else could it be made up of? What is used to make the shapes of the environment?

In our development as children, we are normally concerned with our own reactions and responses; i.e. with holding up our end in the various social situations. We are aware that we can influence the action and behavior of others, but we do not ordinarily feel responsible for their reactions unless they point it out to us. This kind of habitual frame of reference is reflected in the egocentric "I" focus of children's writing. We consider such egocentric writing to be immature, but we assume it will gradually improve as the child grows older and receives more advanced training. However, we also know that frequently the writing does not improve if school is terminated early and the advanced training is not received. It appears, then, that the development of a mature writing style depends upon advanced training, and not upon the process of aging alone.

Child: A ruler.

Teacher: It could be a ruler.....Yes, what else?

Child: Like a finger stretched out.

Teacher: A finger stretched out. What else?

Child: The bottom of a protrack.

Teacher: The bottom of a protrack? Okay....

Child: Protractor.

Teacher: Protractor....yes.

Child: What happens if you put both of them together.

Teacher: Ah, I'm not going to put both of them together right now, but it's interesting....you brought up a very interesting idea. What would happen if you brought both of them together? Okay, let's see what happens.

Children: Oh.....ahh.....

Teacher: In looking at both of them together, what is the difference between the two?

Child: It looks like the mountains with the horizon out there.

Teacher: Alright, it could represent the mountains with the horizon. Somebody said something over here... one of the girls. One is something and the other one is.....

The discipline of creative drama forces the child to develop a "we" focus. In order to function effectively in a group, each participant must create something of the mental frame of reference of the mature dramatist. Such a frame of reference contains more than a mere response or reaction to situations, but demands that the child grasp the whole situation. For example, in a scene in which rain plays a prominent part, the child must not merely react to the rain, but must in one way or another create and retain the illusion of rain. At the same time he/she must integrate rain behavior into the story line. At the the same time the child must act spontaneously in terms of the other persons' lines, even though he/she does not know in advance what those lines will be. Also, the dramatic peaks and valleys must be brought out if the drama is to be effective. This description covers only a small part of the mental life that is carried on in the midst of an improvised scene.

However--acting out the scene is not enough. The child actor must afterward consider the comments of his/her peers and of the teacher. In this post-scene discussion the entire scene is sometimes virtually reconstructed, in which case the group may be asked to do the scene over using the new version.

But--this experience is not enough either. The child is now asked to turn his/her

Child: One is straight and one's (inaudible)

Teacher: Okay, so what are you talking about then. This is the straight....this is a straight what?

Child: Line.

Teacher: Line. And this?

Child: Bumpy.

Teacher: And this is bumpy.....What else might you call it?

Child: Squiggly...

Teacher: Squiggly.

Child: Curvy.

Teacher: Curvy.....fine, okay. So what you're working with is a straight line, 2 straight lines and 2....

Child: Up and down lines.

Teacher: Up and down lines, or curvy or wiggley lines. So what goes to make up the environment? What's the basic thing? The use of what?

Child: Lines.

Teacher: The use of lines. Okay, good. We have.... I have one other kind of line to show you....

Child: I know what kind of lines they are....

Teacher: Tony, Tony, come here please?

attention to the task of responding and evaluating the improvisations of the other children. Thus the child goes through the mental actions and responses of the playwright, actor and critic. Small wonder that it takes considerable time to master this process.

However, from the standpoint of language development, it seems that the process demands the development of a mature frame of reference, which is the basic stuff of a mature writing style. The "I" focus necessarily must at times give way to the more objective "we" focus. Consequently, although writing is not usually a part of improvisational drama, we can reasonably expect that the ability to write is favorably influenced by the growth in dramatic expression. In short, what is often referred to merely as role playing, involves the development of a wide range of faculties in both the cognitive and affective areas. For the teacher who gives serious attention to drama development, benefits to other areas of the curriculum are virtually inevitable.

The above discourse was another excursion into the world of language arts designed to draw the reader's attention to the fact that MOPPET lessons compensate the teacher in many ways for the time and effort put into them. The skills and insights developed in MOPPET are readily transferable to other areas of the curriculum.

Teacher: Okay, what kind of a line are we working with here?

Children: Zig-zag.... A big zig-zag.

Teacher: Okay. And a zig-zag line is made up of what?

Children: Curved?..... up and down.

Teacher: Up and down, straight. Would you show us where the straight line is? Yes? Alright, okay, the zig-zag is made up of several straight lines. Alright, what kind of an environment do you see? Nick?

Children: Orange....(inaudible)

Teacher: One mountain or several?

Child: Oh, a whole bunch of them.

Teacher: Okay, what do you see?

Child: Looks like teeth.

Teacher: Teeth. Okay, what might that environment be?

Children: A monster.... A heart wave machine.

Teacher: A cardiogram machine?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Okay, what would the environment be, where you would find a cardiogram machine?

As was mentioned earlier, the dialogue proceeding in the left column is providing a great deal of material that will be used later as the basis for short dramatic episodes. This activity is necessarily quite lengthy.

The INPUT and INTERACTION parts of the lesson contain two activities that lead up to the actual dramatic presentations. The first section involves the dialogue that is drawing to a close in the left column. This activity will be followed by a short session in movement. This movement activity will also utilize the atmosphere created by visuals, although not necessarily the same visuals used in the present INTERACTION dialogue.

Children: In a hospital.

Teacher: A hospital....yes,.....listen.....wait a minute.... yes?

Child: The shape of a mouth on a jet plane.

Teacher: The shape of a mouth on a jet plane. Where would the environment be where you would see that?

Children: An airport....halloween outside.....

Teacher: Halloween outside.....right....yes?

Children: (inaudible)..... Oh, that's what I was gonna say.

Teacher: Okay....yes?

Child: Lightning.

Teacher: Lightning, where would the environment be?

Child: In the sky.

Teacher: In the sky....okay....yes?

Child: Uh... A king's crown with little tips on it.

Teacher: Hah, hah, a little tipped. Yes, okay, where would you find an environment where there would be a king's crown.

The movement activity is used both as a warm-up and to make the children conscious of the use of space in drama.

Following the movement activity, the children will be divided into small groups, which usually number 3 or 5. The members of each group will decide among themselves (or with the teacher's help when needed) which idea they will work on. Later each group will act out their dramatic presentation before their fellow students, who in turn will offer reactions and commentary at the conclusion of each group's performance.

The small group discussion is preparatory to the actual dramatizations, and the readers might feel that it properly belongs in the INPUT and INTERACTION section. However, the small group session in which the children plan their dramatizations is really a part of the work of creation and properly belongs in the EXPERIENCE section of the lesson.

Since each activity in the lesson is essential, it may appear irrelevant to categorize each as belonging to either the INPUT, INTERACTION or EXPERIENCE. However, in developing and organizing the lesson, it is a great help to the teacher to decide on a certain arbitrary structure. This enables him/her to see clearly the overall

Children: In a castle, on a moat....

Teacher: Okay, in a castle where there was a moat. Alright, we have time for one or two more... Yes?

Child: An indian village.

Teacher: An indian village? Okay....yes?

Child: Checks.

Teacher: Say it again.

Child: Checks.

Teacher: Alright, where would you find checks like that....on a paper?

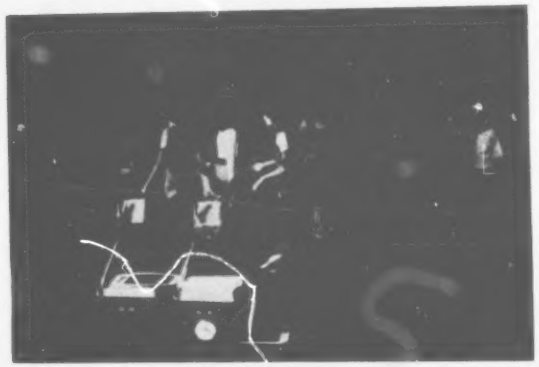
Children: Yeah.....Like when there's two wires and they show it on T.V. and then the things go across like that....

Teacher: Alright, what I would like to have you do now is this: we're going to move in different kinds of line patterns, okay, and I'd like you to stand up, find space, separated from everybody else. Let's work with the zig-zag line....ready? Shh.....freeze.....listen, I'm going to play a rhythm and I'd like you to move in a zig-zag line, to the rhythm.

Children: (Making fast rhythmic beat on hand drum for about a minute. The children start to move. They move for about half a minute.)

picture of the lesson, and then to plan intelligently the materials and teaching strategy for each section. In the teaching of the lesson it is only through a clear understanding of everything that is involved in each activity that enables the teacher to successfully control and guide the lesson, despite the loosening up of controls to allow greater than usual freedom by the students.

It will be seen in the left column that the teacher has decided it is time to make the transition from the discussion to the movement activity.



Teacher: Listen, no bumping into another person. Okay, sit down.

Child: Sit down.

Teacher: Okay, when you were moving in a zig-zag line, what kind of a feeling did you have?

Children: Cool....cool....it was tough.

Teacher: I want order. I want order. I can't hear with everybody talking at once.... Young man, will you listen please? What kind of a feeling did you have when you were moving in a zig-zag line?

Child: It was cool, cause you go up and down, up and down, up and down.

Teacher: You liked it. It was cool because you went up and down, up and down.... Yes?

Child: It was like on your mini-bike.

Teacher: Did you feel like you were on your mini-bike? Did you feel you were on your mini-bike? Okay...good...boys...Nickie?....Yes?

Child: (inaudible)....

Due to the brevity of the explanation preceding the movement activity, it is reasonable to infer that the present class has had previous creative drama lessons; therefore, virtually no explanation is necessary to prepare the children for the new activity. This shortness of explanation is not the case when children are initially introduced to drama. In that situation the teacher should very carefully explain the activity, the reasons for it and the general rules that must be followed. If this is not done, the teacher will find it necessary to continually interrupt the proceedings to interject explanations and rules for behavior (don't bunch up, don't bump one another, don't run, etc.)

The movement activity is interspersed with periods of movement and then periods of discussion. The children are not moving simply to warm up or to get used to moving within a given environment. In the discussion an attempt is being made to help the children form an intellectual recognition of the quality of their movements and of the kind of situation where such move-

Teacher: You felt far out and funky?

Child: Felt like I was drunk.

Teacher: You felt like you could have been drunk? How did the rest of you feel?

Children: Weird.

Teacher: Weird....okay. So I think we have found out shh...that there are some ways in which we can move, whether it be curve, straight or zig-zag. Some of us would prefer to move one way, over other ways. Alright, now what we're going to do is follow through and look at other pictures that create environments.

(We are now skipping ahead to the EXPERIENCE.)

We moved in different ways, different kinds of lines, and we talked about what different lines are composed of, what different environments are composed of, what different shapes are composed of, and feelings certain kinds of environments project for us. And we're going to put on three different kinds of environments and then I'm going to put you into small groups and ask you to create story lines that you can act out. Alright, I'd like you to listen to me for the directions. I'm going to put on the first environment. Do not talk about what you think the environment reminds you of. Save your ideas for your small group.

ment is appropriate. Thus they are beginning to form a vocabulary of movements that they can call upon at will in their later drama improvisations. Except for the explanations and directions, this section of the lesson is conducted in the divergent mode.

Since this lesson is quite long, we have omitted the movement and discussion that follows the other two environments. We have made a bridge from the discussion that ends the INPUT and INTERACTION and have gone directly into the EXPERIENCE.

The EXPERIENCE opens with a planning session in which the framework of the drama improvisations is worked out. It is obvious that the teacher handles this planning session largely in the conventional convergent style.

Children: Ooh,.....aah.....

Teacher: Alright, this is the picture of the first environment. I would like you to think about what kind of an environment this might be that you can use as a setting for a play.

Okay, this is the second environment. I would like you to think about what kind of a space this might be. The setting needs environment for a scene, for a play.

This is the third environment....Shh.... I would like you to think of what kind of an environment this might be?....Okay, now listen to me, look here and listen. In a minute, we're going to break into small groups. You are to choose one of the three environments as a setting for a scene, or what I call a scene, you may call a play. Listen, you are to create a situation or a scene that you will act out for us in which you choose one of these environments as your setting. Decide on which three characters will be represented in the story that you will create for the environment which they enter. The story that you act out should tell whom the three characters are, why they come into this environment and what happens to them so they're faced with some kind of a problem, in this environment. And you should act out what they do to resolve the problem.... Alright, I'm going to repeat it. You have a task in a small group. Choose one of these environments and act out a scene.

The environments are presented again, but this time the frame of reference has changed. Instead of trying to think of as many appropriate environments as possible, the focus is more practical: each of the children is asked to decide on an environment that would interest him/her as a practical setting for a scene to be acted out.

One can see more clearly now why vaguely suggestive visual material has been selected: it facilitates a great variety of ideas. Obvious material, on the other hand, would almost certainly result in most children deciding on the most obvious "right" idea.

The appropriateness of visual material can easily be verified later in the EXPERIENCE section. If there is great variety and imaginativeness in the dramatic presentations, the teacher can conclude that the visual choices were good.

We mentioned earlier that the greatest problem in creative drama results from children resorting to various kinds of disruptive behavior to hide their own embarrassment or feelings of inadequacy. Another frequent problem appears at this point in the lesson where children are put together in small groups, usually 3 or 5 each. Normally children want to be in a group with their friends. Also boys usually want to perform with boys, and girls with girls. In the early stages of drama it is best to humor the children as much as possible, unless, of course, the teacher finds it necessary to separate a disruptive combination. As the children progress in their drama lessons, the

Teacher: vironments as the setting for your story which you will act out. You act out who the three characters are that enter into the environment, you tell why they enter or why they are there, you act out some kind of a problem they're faced within the environment. And you show how they solve the problem. Okay, do you have any questions?.... Do you have any questions?

Child: No.

Teacher: Would you please place yourselves in groups of three...(inaudible)...

Children: (All talking noisily)

Teacher: Does everybody have a group? Let me see the groups.

Children: (All chattering for about five minutes)

Teacher: Oh, come back and sit down with your small groups....Come back and sit down with your small groups.... Okay, I think we're almost ready to act out our stories. Michael, excuse me, someone's speaking. Would you take your group and move back so we have more space. It's been a long time since I've worked with you, and I would just like to review the procedure that we use when we get up to act out our stories. We'll go group by group; everybody will be able to have a turn. Begin your story by saying the word.... please don't do that.... say, "focus" and when you're through with your story

teacher will observe a gradual lessening of both disruptive behavior and the tendency of children to cling to the security of their closest friends. Increased confidence results from increasing drama skills, which in turn makes the whole situation less threatening. This increased poise and confidence in functioning before others is one of the greatest benefits accruing from drama, and, of course, it transfers easily to all areas of the students' lives.

The period of small group discussion usually lasts from 5 to 10 minutes. It is frequently a rather noisy activity with each of the groups busily carrying on an animated discussion. However, as we have repeatedly pointed out: if the accoustics of a room are good, such discussions are not overly disturbing. In regard to the kind of sound conditioning needed, the rugs and drapes of a typical MOPPET room are very helpful.

During the discussion period the teacher moves from group to group, making sure that each is progressing in the identification of a suitable idea for dramatization, the development of a story line with a beginning, middle and end, the clarification of the problem and the process of resolution, the assignment of roles, a general agreement on the use of space, etc.

Teacher: that you're acting out say "curtain." I have one request and that is that you do not talk to these people who are acting out their story because it breaks their concentration. We'll talk about what they did, what was good about what they did when they're finished. The other request that I have is that you do not talk to each other while somebody is acting out a story. You had a time for planning, now is the time for listening and watching. Everybody will get a turn so don't worry about who's going first.

Okay, ready.....say "focus" when you're ready to begin.

Child: "Focus"...(Action begins)... Hi, you comin' out. Yes, wait, I'll ask my mother if I can bring my bow and arrow. Mom, can I bring my bow and arrow out to the highway?

Child: Yes, go ahead.

Child: Thank you.

Child: Do you want me to get my B.B. gun and some cards?

Child: Okay, go. (Considerable action ensues including buzzing sound of car going somewhere and then a thumping noise.)

When the discussion period is finished the children move back in a circle around the wall. They will now function as audience as the successive groups perform.

Teacher: Freeze....Alright, you cannot have that kind of movement. Go on with your story, but you can't have that kind of rough movement. Go on.

Child: (inaudible)

Child: That's what you think.

Child: I'm taking the bow and arrow.

Child: (inaudible)

Child: (inaudible)

Child: I'll call the policeman.

Child: Sit down.

Child: You're always drunk too.

Child: Let me have your keys.

Child: (inaudible)

Child: Aren't you doing that too hard, man .....Cut.

Teacher: Okay, thank you.....What was the environment that the scene represented to them?

Child: Oh.... this is the wrong one.

Teacher: Okay, what was the environment that the scene represented?

Scenes depicting violence of some kind are very, very common among young boys, and this is especially true in their early drama lessons. Therefore, the teacher must be firm and insistent that they obey the rules concerning hitting one another and other too rough behavior. Such violent action is itself allowable but it must be simulated. When children break these rules the teacher is perfectly justified in immediately stopping the scene and restating the rules.

Child: Bow and arrow.

Teacher: A bow and arrow?

Child: Yeah, it goes into the windshield, you see here....

Teacher: It goes into the windshield like what?

Child: This is the mountains, this is the green grass, this is the roof, the bow and arrow hits it and then the B.B. gun....

Teacher: Alright, was this the driver,....Frank, was this the driver that was going by?

Child: Yeah.

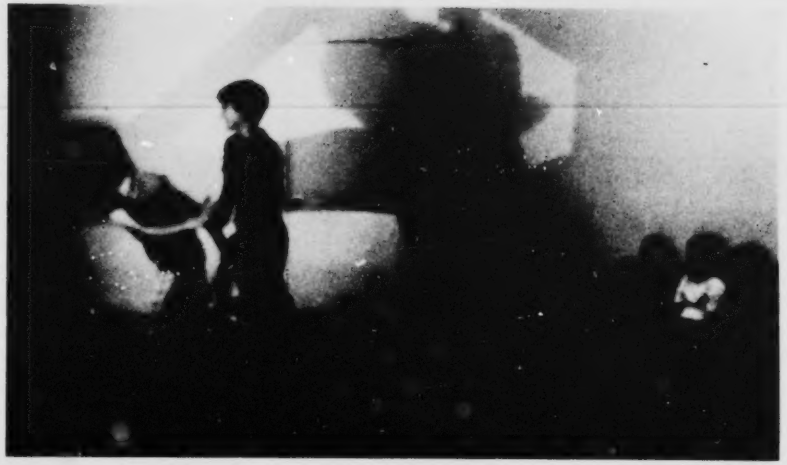
Teacher: And your B.B. gun and bow and arrow hit the car, the windshield of the car....and then the kid was arrested. Why was he arrested?....

Child: (inaudible)

Teacher: Alright, let's get back to the way the story ended. The beginning was very clear, I had to stop you for a second and call freeze... shh....wait a minute... you were getting into reality....you were not acting. You were getting too realistic and the difference between acting and reality....okay.

Child: But it looks better when it's real.

Teacher: But it could also be dangerous....Alright, let's follow.....I want to clear up one



In the discussion at the conclusion of each dramatization every aspect of the scene is open to examination. In this activity the teacher normally maintains a divergent, questioning mode of leadership, except at the end where she may sum up the strengths and weaknesses of the scene along with suggestions that might aid improvement.

In the beginning stages of creative drama, lines are frequently too soft to be audible. This fact is brought out very often in the discussions in order to make the children aware of the effect of their voices.

Teacher: thing here....I'm not quite sure how the story ended.

Child: Oh, well.... I broke his fingers.

Teacher: Okay, let's go back to the characters of who these people were. Who were they?

Child: I don't know his name and I don't know his name.

Child: (inaudible)

Teacher: Alright, you were two kids and who were you Frank?

Frank: A person.

Teacher: Doing what?

Child: A person riding a car.

Teacher: A person riding a car? Okay....who were you? And the problem was the children hitting your windshield?

Child: Yeah, they hit my car with a ... (inaudible)...

Teacher: Alright, and you resolved....and then you resolved the problem that you had by breaking the kid's fingers?

Child: No, I didn't mean to break his fingers.

Teacher: Alright, but what did you do?

Through the questions the teacher asks, she brings out the various aspects of the scene that the children may not be conscious of. Typically the audience is unaware of much that goes into making a scene good or bad. The teacher brings out a very important point in making it clear that acting and reality are different. Then she proceeds to point out that the breaking of fingers did not register with the audience--they did not know what had been done, although it may have seemed realistic to the performers. If the breaker or the breakee had vocalized the fact that the fingers had been broken, then the audience would have had no problem comprehending. It is the teacher's continual task to make clear the disparity between what the performers convey and what they think they are conveying.

Child: I caught his hand, so if he did it again, but I went too hard.

Teacher: So you...(inaudible)... Okay, let's go on to your group... Which picture are you working with? Okay, here we go, we have 2 or 3 more scenes. Ready.... Richard.... listen....both of you....

Child: Hey, there's a car. Maybe there's a crew in it. Let's get it.

Children: It looks like a big one.... What?

Child: So, there's nothing in there.... Oh, I am stuck... help.....help..... my hand's stuck....

Child: Oh, oh, we're trapped in here. I can't get out. Tickle him!

Child: Let's get back in.

Child: Kittchy, kittchy, koo....kittchy, kittchy, koo. (In high bird-like manner) He's openin' his mouth.

Child: Get out, Marty.

Child: I'm trying.... What's that?

Child: A clam.

Child: A clam?

Child: Yeah....(inaudible)....

Teacher: Very sensitive.... an extremely sensitive scene. Let's talk about the environment they went into... which this picture reminded them of.

Child: A clam's mouth.... a big one.

Teacher: Joey.... a clam.... a clam's mouth. Would you say that the scene that they were doing, the story that they were doing was fantasy or reality?

Children: Fantasy.

Teacher: Fantasy.... okay.... and you have to accept the fantasy situation that they were in. Where they discovered a clam, and what happens, when they discovered this clam.... He gets.... he gets.... Yes?

Child: They want Ed to see what was inside of it.

Teacher: They wanted to see what was inside the clam?

Child: Yes.... So, they went inside with their clothes on, and put his hand and they started out, and they were stuck in there, and they tickled him and.....

Teacher: Alright, and the story finished, ended with him getting the problem solved by tickling the clam inside to open his mouth and they were able to escape. It was delightful.... A delightful story ....really a fantastic fantasy.... I think what also was interesting was the movement that they had inside and before even.... after the clam shell had opened,.....(inaudible).... and tickling, the movement of tickling the clam with their feathers.... Okay.... alright girls. Yes?

Child: How did they get the feathers?

This is obviously a very imaginative scene, and the teacher praises it lavishly. However, it is not necessary or desirable to draw unfavorable comparisons between this scene and the previous one. The children know this scene is much better. It is the teacher's job to make the children aware of what the things are in a good scene that make it so successful.

Teacher: They had them with them.

Child: I know, but who would think of taking feathers?

Teacher: He collected bird feathers.

Child: Oh.

Teacher: Here we go.... ready.... listen...."focus"...

Child: Let's take the dog out for a walk around the block.

Child: Oh, I got a good idea, why don't...(inaudible)...

Child: Yeah, but she's a liar anyway. (softly)

Child: So let's go up and see.

Child: Oh.... look at that.

Child: You lost again.

Child: Yeah, I need it.

Child: Come on up, it's simple.

Child: There's someone up there. I wanna go up. (louder)

Child: Get down from there.

Child: I'll go get help.

Child: Oh, sure you will.

Child: (inaudible)

Teacher: Bring out where you are.

Child: Here they are.

Child: Jump down, I'll catch ya.

Teacher: Alright, okay.... this is a very interesting scene. Ah, let's talk about who the characters were, where they were and what problem they were facing.... Who were they? Who were these girls pretending to be? Yes?

Child: I think they're getting bored and I think they're going to one of their friend's house.

Teacher: Alright, they were bored and they went to one of their friend's house, and what happened?

Child: They went running off to the cave like they wanted to explore the cave.... allowed to go into the cave.

Teacher: Okay, and then what happened?.... Frank?

Frank: And then they didn't believe there were caves and then they went up to the cave and got stuck up there.

Teacher: They got stuck on top of or inside the cave.... Yes?

Child: And the other girl said there's something in there and she wouldn't go up there so she ran for help. So she ran for help and they got down.

Teacher: Okay, were you on top of or inside where there were several caves?.... Grace?

Child: They were going into the cave....

Teacher: You were inside the cave and you got stuck.... right?.... or up into a part where you couldn't climb down.... Okay, and then what happened?

Child: I told them there was something up there and they were scared so.... (inaudible)....

Teacher: Okay, alright, I think that you used a lot of imagination to develop this story and your dialogue was interesting, however, I would like you to work on... the next time I see you.... is using your voice.... a little bit little bit louder, so that we can all hear you. Ah, the scene that you were in was a very.... kind of a .... intimate scene that involved the three of you and you were very talkative about the fact that you were bored and looking for something to do and you got to this place, where you were exploring the cave. But I would like you to realize that we would like to hear everything that happens to you. So, if you could talk a little bit louder next time I work with you, okay?.... I think it was very creative and very imaginative and you worked together well as a group.... okay.... Thank you.

Now let's take your group. Alright....how about this group?.... Are you ready?

Child: (inaudible)

Teacher: Why, did you have difficulty?

This is a very convergent, cognitive summing up of the previous groups' performance. The reader will rightly suspect that a potentially very interesting dramatization did not come off well because it was too vague. The dialogue was too soft and too much of the action was left unexplained. These are very common in early drama lessons, and the teacher chooses this occasion to clearly point them out. This needs to be done from time to time. However, if it is done too often, the commentary tends to become too preachy.

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: In what way?

Child: We just couldn't think of one.

Teacher: Okay, did you have difficulty in finding a picture to work with?

Child: We were gonna use this one.... but we couldn't find enough things to do.

Teacher: But you had difficulty searching out an idea that would fit into the scene?.... Did you come up with any ideas as to what this place might represent?

Child: We're gonna use that as an island.

Teacher: Okay, let's imagine that this is an island. I want to help you get started on this here. Since this is an island, who might you be? Because your idea that this is an island is fantastic.... It looks like it could be an island. With the island as your environment, who might you be either in.... on that island or trying to get on that island.

Child: Like we were on a boat and we got stuck and the next thing I'm on the island and then after that we didn't know....

Teacher: Okay, so you're already on the island? Now, just trust me to come out here and pretend that you're characters that are marooned on an

Another serious problem in creative drama involves the occasional group who need extra help in developing a scene. This problem, as with so many problems in drama, also stems from a general feeling of inadequacy, that may predominate among the members of a particular group.

The amount of teacher help that is normally given during the group planning session was not sufficient to enable the present group to get themselves ready to perform. Sometimes the teacher can give such a group more time by allowing them to perform last, in which case the group may or may not manage to get a scene together. In the present case the teacher decided to solve the problem immediately.

The teacher does not solve the problem through the simple act of telling the group what to do. Instead, she questions the children to draw out usable elements. Then she suggests way these elements could be used. The problem is to give just as much help as seems necessary, but no more. If children get the idea that

Teacher: island.... So... just come out into this area.

Child: The temperatures.... We had two people on the island.... two neighbors catched everything....

Teacher: Yes, that would be one idea.... Now, let's imagine that you're on the island with the four characters okay? Alright, if you were on an island and you had just gotten off a ship that had been marooned, you won't make.... how would you get onto this island in the first place?

Child: By a raft.

Teacher: By a raft. Yes, or you could swim. Ah, let's imagine that you found this island, that you jumped off the ship that was sinking and you're swimming to this island..... Would you pretend that you're swimming..... onto this island? Ready ... go.... "focus".... and you get to this island and you pull yourself up onto this island and you lie on the beach. Okay. Do you think you'd all be this close together if you all swam up on the island?

Child: No.

Teacher: You would be separated, I think.... Alright, you swim on the island and are you tired or exhausted from swimming. Could you imagine that you have hardly no energy left hardly.... and you're very, very exhausted. And you're lying on this island.... What might you talk

they can persuade the teacher to do all the mental work, they may develop the habit of never being prepared.

One of the most effective ways to solve the present problem is for the teacher to perform with the timid group. Children especially enjoy this. But, again, the procedure has pitfalls--through flattery the children may attempt to convert the teacher into an entertainer.

As it turns out in the present situation the children have the ingredients for a successful dramatization. They need help in connecting the events into a plausible sequence. Later, when the children finally perform their scene, the reader will notice that they act mostly on suggestions that came from the teacher. Also, the action goes very fast, with a bare minimum of words, as though they want to finish the scene as quickly as possible.

Almost certainly the problems this group needs to work through are psychological. They appear to have enough ability. However, regardless of the genesis of of their timidity, such children are normally the least likely to volunteer for the class play or for any activity that will require composure before a group. Thus they are precisely the children who

Teacher: about when you first got your strength back? What are your problems?.....What are you faced with?

Child: What to eat.

Teacher: What to eat. Okay.

Child: What to drink.

Teacher: What to drink. What else?

Child: Where to sleep.

Teacher: Where to sleep.....what else?

Child: How do we get back.

Teacher: How do you get back to your family or ....(inaudible).....

Child: Oh, I know where you'd go.

Teacher: So if you're faced....shh....listen.... if you're faced with finding food, what would you do?

Child: Look around.... like look around for a tree that has uh..... coconuts.

Teacher: Okay, go back and imagine your ship.... start over again.... I'm not going to talk to you, this time you talk to yourself.

Child: What do you drink though?

Child: You drink coconut juice.

have the greatest need for such activities.

As was mentioned earlier, improvised drama exposes children, it forces them to spontaneously depend on their own resources. The traditional practice of reproducing stories or plays gives children the support of an already created structure. Despite the work of many creative actors, theatre or performance oriented drama is not inherently creative except for the author of the play or work being performed. Improvisational drama, on the other hand, demands to be created on the spot. Thus, it is frightening: "Will I think up the lines?", "Will I remember the story line?", "Will the kids laugh at me?" These are the kinds of considerations that tend to immobilize the more timid souls.

Yet, in the course of time, the repeated successful surmounting of the involved obstacles results in a true increase of confidence. The child knows he/she did it. There was no prepared script to be memorized, no director, no rehearsal, no cue cards, etc. In short--no crutches. In creative drama the child develops the requisite self-reliance because he/she must.

Therefore, the kind of help the teacher is now giving to the fledgling group is a temporary kind of aid that will be withdrawn as soon as possible. It could be said,

Teacher: Coconut juice....okay....shh.... listen .... shh.... alright. I'm not going to talk at all, you have to in your own words, act out what's happening to you, talk about what's happening to you.... Ready?...."focus"....

Child: Oh, oh, we're stuck.... The boat's sinking .... let's....

Child: Jump off to the island.

Children: Splash, splash, puff, puff.

Child: How do we get back?

Child: I don't know. Let's take a rest for a while and we can think of that later.

Child: For a lady you can swim good.

Child: Why not?

Child: What do we have to eat.... and drink?

Child: We'll look around the island and see if there's like anything like growing on the trees.

Child: Here's one!

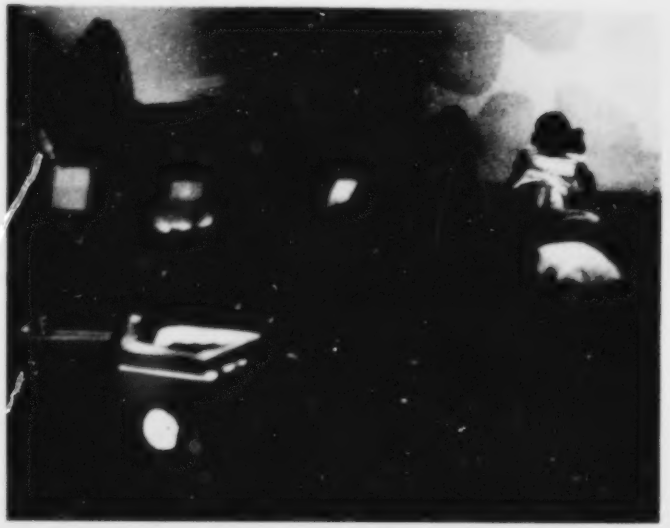
Child: Ugh, you can have it. You can eat it.

Child: I don't want it.

Child: It feels nice, you eat it!

Child: Ugh!

of course, that the teacher is offering the group a crutch, but it would be better to think of it as a kind of encouragement, such as might be given to would-be swimmers to get them into the water. They will be alright after they get used to it.



Teacher: Take them away to finish this part of the story.

Child: Oh, a boat comes by to the rescue. There's a ship.... Let's try to send.... uh.... S.O.S. on the sand.... The ship will come and save us.

Child: (inaudible)

Child: How would they see our S.O.S.

Child: Here comes the ship, let's get on it.

Teacher: Okay, very good, remember you thought you had no ideas that would work? And you had a beautiful idea about the fact that this scene reminded you, this scenery rather or this environment reminded you of an island. And this is how you described it to build a story. Do you think you can try it the next time? Okay, you know more about how to do it the next time? It was beautiful.

What is your group? What picture are you using?

Child: The yellow one.

Teacher: The yellow.... Where's that supposed to be?

Child: On the roof.

Teacher: Okay, don't forget to say "focus" before you begin...(much pause and whispering)... Okay, let's get ready to listen... May I sit

It is preferable that a group be encouraged to complete a scene, even if it is a poor one. For they cannot improve while sitting on the sidelines. Sometimes, of course, a child who has an extreme antipathy toward this activity may be allowed to withdraw. However, given the support a group affords, such cases are rare.

Teacher: here, please.... Okay? Ready.... say "focus" when you're ready to start.

Child: "Focus."

Child: Rrrrrrrrr.....Who's that cop there..... screeeeeech.....

Child: Hold it! Police.

Child: Bang, bang, bang.

Child: Okay, hold it right there, hold it right there. Alright, drop the gun. C'mon....c'mon..... you're caught.... I'll sit in the back seat and watch him.

Child: Alright.

Child: Sit down.

Child: Whrrrr.... whrrrr..... bank, screeeech.... bang, bang, bang, bang, bang.... You okay? .... Oh, shut up.... Yeah, I knew that would happen.

Child: Oh, send an ambulance to uh....Green Street. and send it on the double.

Child: Wait a minute, I don't think you should move. Don't move.

Child: Here it comes.

Child: Get the stretcher out of there. Oh, he's dead, he just died a minute ago.

Child: What? He's dead?

Child: Yeah, I'm dead. (laughing)

Child: Alright, put him in there.... You ought to go to the hospital too.

Child: You ought to go to the hospital too, 'cause you're shot.

Teacher: Okay, let's talk about the scene that they just did. What was the environment that they were using as the setting for their play?

Child: Police car.

Teacher: Okay, the car.... Did the environment that's on the screen represent to you the car that you were using?

Children: Yeah, yeah..... the roads.

Teacher: Can you describe....

Child: With the windshield.... the front windshield.

Teacher: Right. What else,Billy, did you see in the environment.

Child: A road.

We grownups would probably prefer that children (especially boys) choose fewer violent themes. However, in our culture such thematic material is apparently very attractive to them. The teacher should not be discouraged by this tendency, because the violent themes are very serviceable in the teaching of the fundamentals of creative drama. The only real problem is to make sure that the children obey the rules against hitting, kicking and other overly rough behavior. After they have assimilated the idea that rough and tumble action must be simulated, the way is then clear to approach violent themes in the same manner as any other.

The reader will observe that the scene being portrayed in the left column is another violent scene, somewhat similar in spirit to the first scene we examined. However, this time there was no need to stop the scene to warn the participants about unpermissable behavior. On the contrary, the violent action was extremely well controlled. In the case of the chase scene the teacher felt the group had handled it especially well and that they should be commended.

When violence is handled in this way, it is, in a sense, assimilated constructively without our having to resort to the false

Teacher: A road, okay.... Girls...(inaudible)... In the environment where did you see the road?

Children: Some place there.... right here.... go up there and....

Teacher: Who were the characters that were in this particular scene?

Child: Two cops and a robber.

Teacher: And a robber. Okay, alright.... two cops and a robber. What did you particularly like in their action or in their dialogue that told us or communicated to us who they were and what was happening to them?

Child: Oh, the part where they said stop that car, ask that robber, that robber that robbed the bank.

Child: No. I said cop killer.

Teacher: Okay, you like the way it opened.... that the opening of the scene that told us right away what was happening. And who they were. Okay, good.... What were you going to say that you liked?

Child: They'd like to do theirs next.

Child: No!

Teacher: Did you have something you wanted to comment on? I thought what was interesting was the way you used all the space in here for

stance of forbidding or suppressing it. Children are guided toward the realization that there is nothing wrong or unnatural about violent urges, but they must learn to be the master rather than the victim of such urges.

This is an example of one of the many real life problems that children must work through as they grow up. Improvised drama is an extremely effective avenue through which children can come to grips in a nonthreatening setting with some of life's most vexing problems and be helped in analyzing and coping with them in a constructive manner.

This activity also has a great deal to do with the formation of a mature scale of values. Through interacting with other children, each child learns that he/she must at times depend on others and that others will depend on him/her. In this way a functional self confidence is developed that is based on successful shared experience with other people. For certainly real confidence entails confidence in others as well as in ourselves.

Teacher: your chase scene of trying to get the robber. And yet, your story did not become uncontrolled. Your chase scene did not become uncontrolled, or wild. You disciplined yourself to use the chase scene in the story but it didn't take over the story. It was very good.... Thank you.... Alright, let's look over here for a minute.

Child: The way you know that they were in police cars when....

Teacher: Oh, excuse me. Yes?

Child: Because when he picked up the mike to talk in it, and he called for the ambulance.

Child: Yeah.... and also....

Teacher: Can we talk one at a time so we can hear what each other's saying.... Then you liked the pantomime that they used, and the dialogue.

Child: The only part that looked wrong, when he was jumping.... when he went out on the... un back of the car 'cause he didn't even go like this or nothing like that. Just going, kicking the door open and jumping out or something like that.

Teacher: Then are you saying that you would like to see the pantomime on opening the door?

Child: Like you could show the pantomime and opening the door and getting out like that.

At this point it appears that the teacher was ready to go to the next dramatization. However, there were children who wanted to discuss the present scene more fully. As it turned out, they had some pertinent things to say about the need for more pantomime to give better definition to the story.

This is a practical illustration of the kind of problem drama teachers frequently encounter due to the fact that the lessons tend to be long. The lesson structure and the nature of the activities make it difficult to eliminate anything, also no activity can be greatly shortened without hurting the process. Consequently the teacher is called upon to constantly exercise judgment on how long each activity will be allowed to last.

The obvious solution, of course, is to schedule an open-ended block of time, but this is too often impractical. Therefore, teachers will often find it necessary to do as the teacher did here: to handle the remaining discussion as briefly as possible and then hurry on.

Obviously, if the time had been available, this was a natural opportunity to discuss the importance of adding details of pantomime to fully round out characterizations. However, to have done so would almost certainly have cost the last groups much or perhaps all of their performance time.

Teacher: Alright, thank you. Let's go on with the next scene. Okay, would you fellows stand over to the side now please.... The next group.... which picture are you working with?

Child: The sling shot, like the sling shot. The middle one.

Teacher: Okay, ready, please say.... wait a minute.... please say "focus."

Child: "Focus."

Child: You have to get up for school now. Go get dressed. I'm making breakfast.

Child: Okay. (Silence for a period)

Child: Choo.... wow.... ooh.

Child: What's the matter?

Child: Nothing.

Child: Hey, you'll have to go to the store for me, I want some bread and eggs.

Child: Chooo.... ouch.... chooo....

Child: Busted. Some kid out there.... uh, hit me with a sling shot.

Child: Is that what's the matter?

Child: Yeah.

Child: You go cutside and I'll sneak up behind the bushes and get him while he's.....

Child: Stop that, you boy.

Child: Leave me alone.

Child: You're getting to me.... Where do you live?

Child: 2840 Williams Road.

Child: No he don't.

Child: I know where he lives.

Child: Now I'm gonna....(inaudible).... knock, knock, knock.

Child: Hello.

Child: Your son's been hittin' my daughter with sling shots everyday.... I hope you'll do something about it.

Child: Where is the sling shot?

Child: I threw it away.

Child: (crying) He threw my sling shot away.

Child: You got another one, huh.

Child: Nooo....

Child: Give me that thing.

Child: Ow.... (crying)

Child: You're not really suppose to hit the kid.

Teacher: Very nice. Okay, let's talk about what they did? Let's first of all determine what the environment was that was suggested to them by the media. What was the environment they were working in?

Child: They were going... (inaudible) ...

Teacher: Yes?

Child: If you were walking and say you got like there, say you were walking regular like your pattern you'd walk....(inaudible)....

Child: No, that's the sling shot.

Teacher: Okay.

Child: This part right here is the part that you have to pull back. And that part there is the part where you hold it and you pull it back, pssst....

Teacher: On the sling shot?

Child: Uh, huh.

Child: And another thing, like where they were. Like this would be the bushes and sidewalk where she was walking.

Teacher: Yes,..... good.

This scene is somewhat more advanced than most of the others in respect to the characterizations, which changed sex and generations. The boy with the sling shot is played by a girl, and one girl obviously changed characters to do the mother of the boy. The theme deals with the kind of immediate problem that the children and their families might actually encounter in their own neighborhood. Yet, the scene is handled in a very competent manner and uses the same basic techniques as the more unusual dramatizations.

Child: It could be that.

Teacher: That's true.... Alright, let's talk about the acting.... the pantomime and the dialogue. What did you like about what they did?

Child: I didn't like it.

Teacher: What did you say?

Child: I like when...(inaudible)... goes pstchoo... and Kenny goes... aahhh (scream)....

Teacher: Alright, you liked the sound effects. When the child was hit by the sling shot? You liked the sound effects? Okay, could we share our ideas one at a time.....please....

Child: I liked the part where the first time he hit her she was walking along and she went ooh, ploop....

Teacher: Alright, you liked the movement, the pantomime. Yes?

Child: I like when Candy got hit and she didn't even feel anything from it.

Teacher: What would you prefer to use?

Child: She fell and went oh....(all chattering)

Teacher: Okay, what are you saying you would like to have...

This scene contains little of the kind of fantasy that was employed in the earlier scene involving the boys who became trapped inside a giant clam. The earlier dramatization represented the outer extreme of invention in the lesson, and the present scene is the closest to everyday life. Yet, the present scene is quite inventive. Actually the least imaginative is probably the cops and robbers scene, which is almost certainly a direct borrowing of commonplace TV fare.

Child: Louder, she can't even get louder cause, she went shhh.....

Teacher: You would like to have her follow..(inaudible) ... Ah, I think it was very interesting, the story line that came out and the way they worked together as a group. You worked very well, you really listened to each other and played off one another. The other thing that was particularly good was the pantomime, when your bag of groceries got hit, and you got hit and you dropped them.... and then you tried to pick them up.

Child: And the eggs broke all over the place.

Teacher: There was a good beginning where you established where the girl was going and there was a good middle part where she got hit by the sling shot, and the ending was very good because you showed what happened to the girl. You communicated that she was caught and turned over to her mother and reprimanded or punished. Okay, you were playing the part of the boy?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Actually it could be played by a boy or a girl.... Okay, this last group, please say "focus" before you begin.... Boys, listen please. Billy I think they need a chair.

At this point in the EXPERIENCE, the teacher has seen enough of the dramatization to enable her to commence evaluating the success of the INPUT and INTERACTION. In this lesson there obviously has been great variety: the kids attacking an automobile driver with a BB gun and bow and arrows; the boys in the giant clam; the girls exploring the cave; the girls who swam to an island after their boat sank; two cops and a robber; and the present scene. All contain imagination in varying amounts, but equally important is the variety of themes. There is no obvious overlap, which would tell us that the children were imitating each other rather than inventing their own.

The reader will notice that the teacher has used the next appropriate opportunity to return to the subject of pantomime, which she left somewhat abruptly at the close of the previous post-commentary. We point this out merely to make clear that the basic structure and elements of improvisational drama are such that opportunities are constantly recurring wherein concepts can be referred to again and again in ever changing contexts. Therefore, the pressure of time is not really as severe as it might appear. No golden opportunity is irretrievably lost. Thus the teacher is safe in handling each group with adequate attention, but there is no necessity to overdo by going into great detail in each situation.

Child: (Rustling for some moments as they get ready,)... "focus."

Child: Where's the money?

Child: I lost it.

Child: What? (slap)

Child: What, you was walking... (inaudible)...

Child: What? You what?

Child: (Slap)

Child: .... Very funny, but boy it's gonna happen to you. (slap, clump)

Child: Tell him Bud, cut it out.

Child: Hold it right there. (slap, clump. Shooting and lot of fighting)

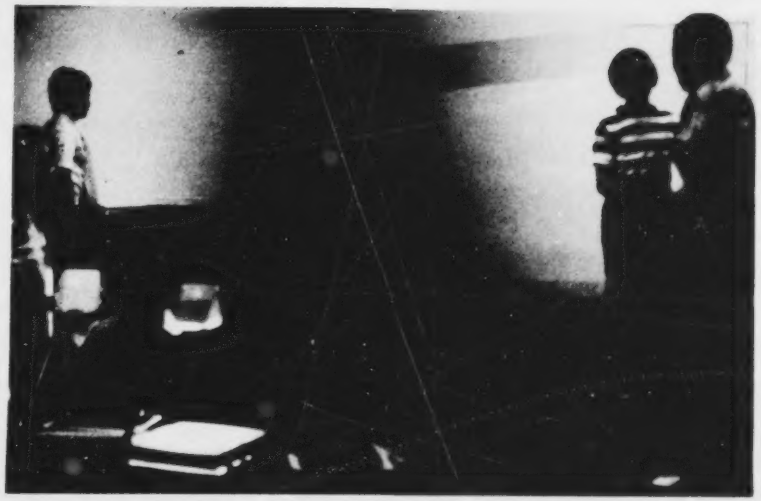
Child: Aaahh..... Send an ambulance over here on the double.

Child: Okay, I'll be right over. "Curtain."

Teacher: Okay, thank you. Ah, what was the environment.... let me ask you, what was the environment that the media suggested to that?

Child: That wasn't....this ain't it.

Child: Oh no, this isn't it.



Teacher: Were you reusing the other media?

Child: A dark alley.

Teacher: What did the environment suggest to them?

Child: A bashed up alley.

Teacher: A bashed up alley with lots of nooks and cranies?

Child: Uh, huh.

Teacher: Garbage? Boxes? Alright, so the scene took place in an alley and what kind of movement or dialogue did we see that told us who they were?.... Yes?

Child: I think the way they walked along like they're hitting and everything.... like they were robbers, like they shoot it out.... like they were robbers. Like um.... when Peter said, Where's the money?

Teacher: Okay, they were robbers. Were they friends in the end of the story? Were they working together as robbers do you think?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Well, what happened?

Child: Well, then when Nickie didn't come up with.... when he lost the money....

Since creative drama lessons are usually quite long, the primary problem tends to be a shortage of time to deal adequately with each group. Sometimes there is not enough time to see every group, or the post-scene discussion must be cut short, or there is not time to allow one or two groups to do their scene over even though it is clearly desirable. In these cases, the teacher should acknowledge the problem and make it clear that it is lack of time and not lack of interest that has forced the curtailment of some activities. In cases where some groups did not perform at all, it is best to have them do their scenes at the beginning of next session.

Teacher: Then what happened?

Child: Peter didn't believe him so he started fightin'.

Teacher: Okay, I think, I agree with you.... I like the way they choreographed the fight scene. It was a very effective fight scene with sound effects and movements but nobody actually getting hit. That was very good acting.... Millie?

Child: Um, I just liked the part where Michael went on the radio to get an ambulance here.

Teacher: Where? It could be anywhere? So, you were saying, you think then that you would like to do that again?

Child: Like um.... 121 River Street, something like that.

Teacher: You would like a specific description where to send the ambulance?

Child: Yeah.... (inaudible)...

Teacher: That's a good comment Billy.

Child: Like when they were fighting....un Nickie... um.... Peter, he just, he didn't punch him. He just went like this. Ugh..... Peter was like this.... um.... and he just went like that... No, he just went like that..... (All chattering)

Since time is clearly a problem, there is a human temptation for the teacher to restrict post-scene commentary somewhat in order to get everything in. Actually, this is not a desirable approach. It works out better to finish the activities in future sessions, rather than to develop the habit of cutting corners. Therefore, each scene must be given the kind of attention it deserves.

The present scene is quite short. The fact that it is short is not necessarily a defect. It becomes so only if the time was not taken to fully act out all the pertinent aspects of the scene. It appears that this group rushed.

Hurrying through scenes is, again, typical of students who are not yet at home with creative drama. Their lack of expertise, combined with their unease in a strange medium causes them to rush unthinkingly through a perfectly good scene and flaw it with acts of omission.

The criteria, then, for the length of a scene should be to take as long as is needed to convey to the audience a satisfactory impression of the scene. In the present case, the scene was short in terms of both dialogue and action. The performers probably felt that they had done everything that was necessary to get their idea across. However, the teacher through her questions suggests

Teacher: Alright, okay, anything else that you'd like to talk about that you liked in this lesson? That you thought was particularly good and effective?

Child: I liked when Nickie fell like this.... and grabbed... oh yeah, Pete's shirt like that. And Wayne missed him too.

Teacher: Okay, Billy?

Billy: I like when Eric came in and said um.... What are you doing?

Teacher: Let me ask you, if they were to do this scene again were there any questions left unanswered that you would like to have acted out.

Child: Yeah, do it again.

Teacher: Listen.... the time is limiting us today, but if you do the scene again, what would you like added to the scene?

Children: Aaaah.... (All chattering)

Teacher: Listen.... Billy?

Billy: The one talking at the radio with.... um, like where they are.

Teacher: Alright,..... Yes?

that only the bare outlines of dramatization actually came through.

The visual environment only suggested the mood or the kind of setting. If an actor had said, "Boy, this alley is dark," it would have placed the action more precisely and added to the plausibility of the scene. To further enhance the scene the actors could have commented on all the nooks and crannies in the alley. Such things are obviously clear to the actors in their own minds, but, being immature as well as inexperienced, they are unaware that the audience does not see the same things until the teacher tactfully brings them out.

When carrying on this post-scene commentary the teacher should be careful to bring out the positive things that happened. For example, the teacher commends the present group for the effective way they handled the fight scene without hitting anyone. The reader will note that this post-scene commentary was quite long, but this is the case when considerable negative points are brought out. However, the negative should be counter-balanced with the positive. It will not do to bring out a great deal of negative material, and then summarily close the discussion with one or two positive comments: the positive perspective cannot be reestablished that easily. If the teacher must err

Child: Yeah, but when Eric like um.... when he said like....(inaudible).... Stuck, cut it out. He walks over and then he punches him.

Teacher: So then you'd like to know why?.... Alright. Can we talk one at a time please. So we can hear each other. Alright, you would like to know why then, when he told them to cut out the fighting that he made it confusing.... Alright, we have time for one more comment.... Yes?

Child: Like the next time like when he let him swing his arms 'cause he didn't swing his arm.... he just fell.

Teacher: Yes.... listen.... yes.... excuse me.... wait a minute, I can't hear you.

Child: Like when he should open the door, when he opened the door he went out like that and he shoulda went out like this....

Teacher: Alright then that's pantomime. You would like to see him act out opening the doors.

Child: And he started falling on the ground like... like when the guy started jumping out of the car, he just went like that.

on the side of either positive or negative commentary, the positive option is much to be preferred. The teacher should strive to create a positive atmosphere that children will want to return to. Maintaining a balance between the positive and negative weight of commentary is the primary means of creating such a positive atmosphere. If the commentary becomes too negative the groups will not want to perform again. Conversely, if there is too little attention given to the shortcomings and omissions, the groups will not know what to do to improve. Of course, the occasional scene that is truly excellent should receive appropriate recognition. But through it all the teacher is trying to create an atmosphere in which each child has the satisfaction of having accomplished something worthwhile and also to have gained some constructive knowledge to motivate future improvement.

The child who said at the close of the lesson, "I want to stay," expresses very well the kind of student attitude the teacher should strive for.

Teacher: Alright.... Okay. You did some very, very good scenes today and I know that you have to go to another class. So that will be it for today. Thank you very much.

Children: Goodbye.

Teacher: Goodbye.

Child: I wanna stay.

- Anne Battle -

The fourth lesson is a junior high social studies lesson "Reincarnation." Lesson Form A is used because the INPUT, INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE follow one another.

The reader will note that there are plans for two lessons on India: one on the Caste System and one on Reincarnation. However, in the lesson that follows, it will be seen that only one lesson is taught, and further, that the EXPERIENCE focuses on drawing instead of following the original lesson plans into drama or poetry.

GRADE - SEVENTH

NATURE OF HINDU SOCIETY, THE CASTE SYSTEM - I

OBJECTIVES

. At the end of this lesson the student will be able to:

Describe the nature of Indian society.

Identify the structure of the caste system.

Compare Buddha culture to present U.S.A. culture.

Create a class system for the U.S.A.

Improvise a class portrayal of the caste system of India.

EQUIPMENT

- Slide projector
- Screen

MATERIALS

- MOPPET Kit

  Slides on people of India

. . . . . .

LESSON SCHEME

INPUT

- Show slides of Indian society.

  Discuss nature of caste system while slides are being shown.

- Have class suggest possible class themes for the U.S.A. (Be careful of of religious or racial themes. Use if they are all acceptable to all in group.)

INTERACTION

- Write major themes on board.
- Distribute paper. Have pupils select a theme and construct categories of people they would include in that area.

INTERACTION (Con't.)

- Suggest order be from top person to lowest person.
- Read with permission or have students read their works.

EXPERIENCE

- Divide class into groups. Assign each group one of the castes. Have the class act out scenes showing the treatment of each other.
- Have children themselves make up rules governing each caste. Alternate within the group so each can feel what it is like being in lowest to highest caste.
- Class can continue acting out their caste systems for a short period of time.
- Have them keep a daily log and let them express their feelings experienced as a member of each group.
- Conduct an open-ended discussion on the feelings they want to share.

- Ted Tylicki -

GRADE - SEVENTH

NATURE OF HINDU SOCIETY, REINCARNATION - II

OBJECTIVES

- At the end of this lesson the student will be able to:

  Gain a respect for the Hindu belief in rebirth.

  Create individual poems called "I'd Like To Be...."

  Express oneself in real or abstract thinking.

  Gain an appreciation for himself and creative writing.

EQUIPMENT

- Slide projector
- Overhead projector
- Screen

MATERIALS

- MOPPET Kit

  Transparencies from books -

  Imagination's Other Place, Helen Plotz, Thomas Crowell Co., 1955

  Shivas Pigeon's, Jon & Rumer Godden, Viking Press, 1972

  Slides on reincarnation

- Also:

  Blank transparencies

  Paper/pens/pencils

.....

LESSON SCHEME

INPUT

- Show slides on reincarnation and poems.
- Have volunteers read poems shown on screen.

INTERACTION

- Discuss Hindu belief of reincarnation.
- Have students express in one word what they would like to be if they were Hindu and believed in rebirth.
- Suggest categories:

  A) person

  B) animal

  C) plant

EXPERIENCE

- Have students select area above, and construct a brief poem on their selection.
- Let students type or write their poems on paper. Make transparencies of their work.
- Show their poems on the screen and ask writer to read the poem. He may want you to read it instead.

- Ted Tylicki -

This manual speaks at length about exploration and about flexibility and the evolving of lessons, but it is difficult to illustrate this growth and development process. However, when comparing the original lesson plans with the present lesson, the readers will see that the teacher has made large modifications: the cognitive content of the original two lessons were combined, and art and writing experiences are substituted for the original creative drama and poetry experiences.

SEVENTH GRADE ART/SOCIAL STUDIES LESSON "REINCARNATION"

Transcript		Comments & Pictures
Children:	(All speaking as a group among themselves.)	In the three sample lessons we have already examined, it was shown how the creative process can be used in art, poetry and creative drama. In the last sample lesson we will show one of the many ways that curriculum content and the creative process can be combined.
Child:	Hold it down now.	
Child:	Cool it, you guys, cool it.	
Child:	Stop it, we don't know if it's going to be taped.	
Child:	Taped!	
Child:	The press. Get my good side.	
Children:	(All speaking at the same time.)	Many teachers will be more interested in this subject area lesson than they were in the arts lessons. However, we would like to caution teachers against the idea of just tacking a creative experience onto the end of a content lesson. Such a procedure is not likely to be very effective. One will note in the lesson presented here that the content and the creative experience were ordered in such a way that when students look back on the lesson they will find it difficult
Child:	Is that tape recorder on?	
Children:	Uh huh. Better now than ever. Quiet!	

Child: Hey, where's the popcorn?

Teacher: This is a lesson on the dominant religion of India which is Hinduism. I'll give you a little background information for some of you who need review. For those of you who didn't pay attention in class, it will be brand new.

The basic religion of India is Hinduism. The Hindus believe theirs is the oldest religion in the world. It started approximately 1500 years B.C. The most interesting thing about it is that it is a very broad religion. It has absorbed many other religions and incorporated or added on their beliefs. Hinduism has been compared to a sponge.... that absorbs other religions. By continually adding new things it has become very complex.... and quite liberal. In fact you can take up an altogether different religion and remain a Hindu.

Buddhism is an example of another religion that originated in India and gained a very large following. Later it nearly died out in India.... while Hinduism continued to be the dominant religion.

The legend of the development of Buddhism is very interesting. It started about 5 or 6 hundred years B.C. when a prince by the name of Gautama, who lived in luxury, decided to find out the true meaning of life. Gautama traveled throughout his city, and far beyond his palace gates, but all he came upon in his wanderings was sickness, disease, general misery and death. So, as a result, he decided to

to separate content from experience.

This lesson was created and taught by Ted Tylicki, a junior high school social studies teacher. In this lesson the INPUT, INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE follow pretty much in order. Since the opening, or INPUT, section is done very much in the customary convergent mode of instruction, there will be little need for comment. Therefore, we will present a great many pictures so the reader can get a good visual impression of the excellence of Mr. Tylicki's organization.

Teacher: give up all his riches and seek what he considered the true meaning of life. That was the beginning of the f- -tion of the religion....

Gautama wandered for several years throughout the land, and he tried many methods to gain wisdom or enlightenment. But finally he decided he wasn't getting anywhere. Nothing was coming to him in revelation. So.... he decided to sit down under a bodhi tree. He said to himself that he was going to fast until a revelation came to him....and he was not going to change his position during his fasting. So he got into a sitting position with his legs crossed--the yoga position of today.

At the site where he did this, there is now a Bo tree, capitol B-O. This tree is believed to be a descendent of the tree Gautama sat under when he finally received his enlightenment. There is also a temple where you can go in and pay religious homage.

So.... after Gautama had meditated.... and fasted.... and disciplined himself.... at last .... in a trance.... he received enlightenment.... This enlightenment is contained in the Four Noble Truths which are the foundations of the Buddhist religion. As you can see up there.... in the middle picture, since man's life is one of pain and suffering, how then, can he eliminate this pain and suffering? Simply by leading a good life.... as he is directed by those Four Noble Truths.

After arriving at these Four Noble Truths, Gautama then went about the world preaching. The people changed his name from Gautama to the Buddha,

Unfortunately the print (done on a large primary typewriter) could not be photographed large enough to be legible here. However, the reader can see that the sides of the screen (using slides) established the atmosphere of India, and the center section (using overhead transparencies) changes as the presentation progresses.

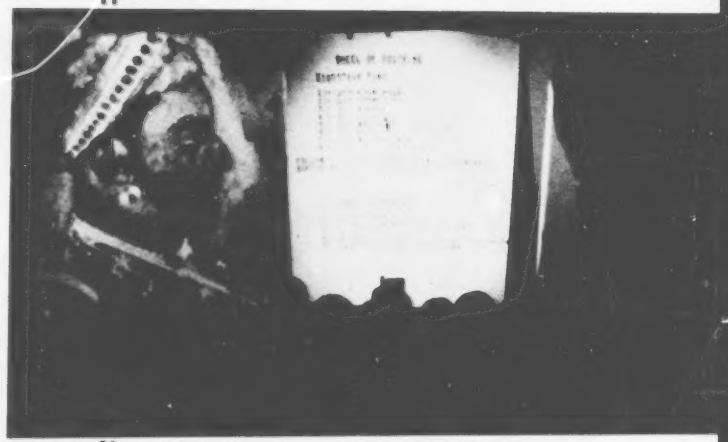
Teacher: which means "the Enlightened One." That was the beginning of the formation of Buddhism.

India was a perfect area for this religion to spread.... People were very receptive because they were suffering.... living in all kinds of misery. A king by the name of Asoka even converted his military army into missionaries and sent them throughout all of Southeast Asia. In this way the religion of Buddhism began spreading throughout India and beyond.... into China and Southeast Asia.... and reaching Vietnam and going across the South China Sea into the Philippine Islands and to Japan.

You have seen that the Four Noble Truths tell man that his existence is miserable. But they also point out the way to his salvation. Notice the Wheel of Doctrine, containing the Eightfold Path. This contains the eight (8) basic rules through which a man can eliminate his suffering. It doesn't matter what position or caste you are born into; you can eliminate suffering by following those rules: having right knowledge, right intention, right speech, right conduct, right means of livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.... avoid extremes.... in other words follow the middle way or path.

Later on, you will pick out some of these laws for me and you will try to explain them. You will tell us how following those laws can lead to a better life.... either in your own situation or one that you make up.

Down at the bottom of the screen.... you can see another part of the Buddhist doctrine.... a set of



Teacher: rules called "the Code of Conduct," sometimes called the Ten Commandments of Buddhism. These rules were to be followed strictly by the beggar monks.... It wasn't really expected that everyone could live up to these rules. The monks were forbidden to destroy life... steal.... lie.... commit impure acts.... drink strong drink.... dance or sing or act in public shows, (some of these may seem a bit funny to you) ornament themselves, receive money, eat between meals or use high luxurious beds. You can see some of the Ten Commandments of the Bible in this religion.

Okay, that's the story of Buddhism, one of the many religions that have been very strong in India at one time or another. But, always Hinduism has remained the primary religion in India.... Today more than 80% of the population are Hindus.

I will tell you briefly what holds the religion and the society of India together. The answer is the caste system. The rules I showed you in Buddhism have much in common with Hinduism and many other religions of India. They accept the caste system and reincarnation....being born again.

In the 1950 Constitution, the government technically outlawed the caste system. But because of tradition and religion, it is still in existence. If you are born into a certain caste, the only way to get out is to lead a good life based on the rules for a good life.

Now, let's examine how the caste system works. When you die, if you lead a good life, you will automatically be reborn into the next higher group. Naturally, if you have led a bad life, you will go down a notch or two when you die. If you are an untouchable (the lowest group) it is bad conduct for you to complain of your situation.... Naturally this is the group that does most of the suffering. They are the people who are living in the streets....you'll see some slides of that. Nevertheless, if the untouchables complain about life and don't accept it as their religious background and up-bringing say they should, then their spirit or soul can be reborn into that

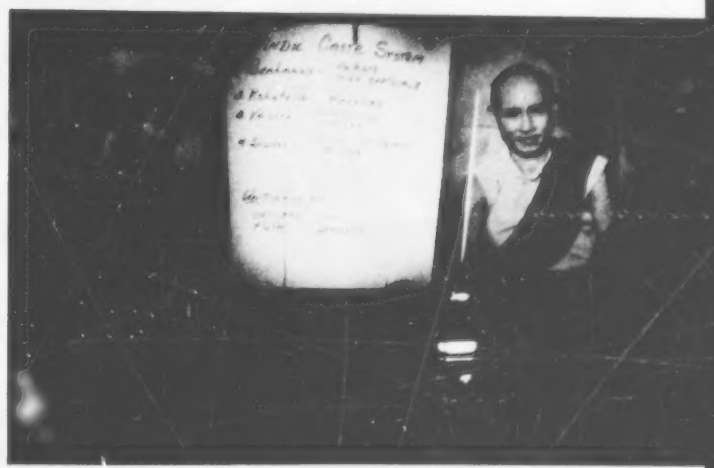
Teacher: of an animal or an insect.... Now keep in mind, this subject of reincarnation--rebirth.... we'll get back to it later on.

Child: This is true?

Teacher: Well.... the people of India believe it is..... Now let's examine the different levels of the caste system. The highest castes are called Brahman's. These are the priests and the high officials. Two samples of the officials are on the screen. Notice the sample of the Brahman. The main goal in the life of an Indian is to reach the state of Nirvana, which is the state of the world soul. In order to do that, you have to be in a number one group, the Brahman class.

These are samples of monks. The life of a monk is one of complete service to the religion. They shave their heads, in most cases they wear orange robes instead of the dark color seen here. The monk on the left, without the shaved head is not from India, but from the Vietnam area. One of the monks' few possessions is an alms bowl, which they must use daily when begging for contributions or food. They own a net or a filter, in order to filter things.... even drinking water.... so as not to accidentally swallow even a tiny insect.... because animals of all types are believed to have once contained souls of previous people. Therefore, they respect them. In fact, during World War II, when United States Marines were stationed in India in the largest cities, they were told that if by any chance they were involved in a situation where they might collide with a person or a cow, hit the person..... save the cow. Cows are everywhere in the big cities and they are considered sacred.

Below it can be seen that the Brahman slides change to monks. The center overhead now remains stationary and the outside slides move.



Child: Hit the person first. (laughter)

Teacher: This is the second class now. The Kshatriyas Indian or warrior class.... Third class Vaisyas, merchants and farmers.... The merchants sell their wares right in the middle of the streets throughout the town. Farmers, likewise, sell in the middle of the square in the largest cities. Some merchants are fortunate enough to own the shops you see in the background.... in the right hand side. But most of your poorer merchants sell right in the streets..... Another group is the Sudras, skilled craftsman and laborers. Below these castes are the untouchables.... the lowest group of all. In what group would you classify the man on the right?

Children: Varied answers.

Teacher: Possibly an untouchable. Possibly at one time. What else? Other possibilities.... Could he have been a merchant, farmer, skilled craftsman or laborer?

These are the monks in the orange robes that I told you about.... Farmer, shepherd on the right hand side.... Farming of course is very primitive, they use old tools and equipment in most areas.... with the exception of the large farm owners who can afford more modern equipment. A large variety of crops are grown--cotton, rice, tea. Fishermen would come under group number three. I don't have it on the transparencies, but they would be in the group along with the farmers....

This is a sample of an untouchable, a young lad, and then on the right side, an Indian Brahman. In the middle is a peom by an Indian poet. Somebody read that for me.

Child: Silently stand some children of the poor,

At this point a few slides are shown that test the children's ability to distinguish the various castes.

Child: And shyly, hungry eyes half-turned aside,
Observe the eater through the open door.

(The Subhasitaratnakosa)

Teacher: Alright, an example of part of the life of the untouchables.... they must beg for food. In most cases, the government does not provide for it.... So, the poem is appropriate for giving you an idea. There is a typical example of an alm bowl which most untouchables have in their possession.... and very little else.... A sample of cows right along city streets - right in amongst the people, the workers. See in the background, the cars.... They accept it as a way of life. Certainly if you were to look at your own situation, you'd have to say your.... you could not place any kind of numerical percent on how well off you are in comparison with these people.... You might ask why these people accept this way of life, even though it's outlawed by the Constitution?.... Well, the answer is that their religious views and upbringing teach them to accept their low station in life. Here is an example of a poem that would go along with that type of thought. Heredity, by Thomas Hardy. Okay. Somebody read that.

Child: "I am the family face. Flesh perishes, I live on. Projecting trait and trace through time to times anon, and leaping from place to place over oblivion. The years-heired feature that can in curve and voice and eye despise the human span of endurance--that is I; The eternal thing in man that heeds no call to die."

Child: "Man is but a Castaway" by Clarence Day. "Man is but a castaway on this planet's shore. He survives from day to day. Can he ask for more? Vast and intricate the store of his printed words. Short and simple is the lore of the beasts and birds."

Teacher: This poem is by an Indian author. It goes along with the slide on the right. This is a daily scene in the streets of cities like Calcutta, New Dehli, Bombay and the largest cities. People are sleeping on the streets because of the overcrowded conditions due to population and therefore, of course, many of them are prone to disease and even death.

Child: "On the night pavement they lie, soft exclamation points to the gutter, wrapped in a gray cloth, not in disarray, but correct, circumspect, in place, as if to say, 'This is where we are in the cycle of existence. We lie with grace in our believing sleep.' And yet we, who knows? It could be that round the dreams of Kali, Krishna in that mild brown-bodied sleep, there curls the smoke of a violent anger ten centuries deep."

Teacher: Here's some slide samples of the various groups of the caste system. Merchant on the right, farmer, more farmers.... On the right you have the decorated car of the high official.... Skilled carftsman, working in a factory. And finally, you have the area where Hinduism is most common. Over on the right is India and the areas of Pakistan and Bangladesh. Over on the left hand side are Indonesia and Malaysia.... In the Southeast Asia section are Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. And, where they have Hinduism they tend to have the caste system. Now.... we don't have a religious caste system. But... do we have any kind of class system in the U.S....any way of dividing people according to class?

Children: (Mixed) Yes.... No.... Yes.... a little bit.

Teacher: Think about it and if you come up with an answer, raise your hand.

Child: Rich, middle and poor.

Teacher: Okay, you're talking now about the financial class system. Okay. Do we have any other kind of class system?.... How do we categorize people in the United States? Aside from money.

Child: By color.

Teacher: Color. Alright, definitely color. Red, white, blue, green or whatever. What else?

Child: Government.

Teacher: Government, in terms of political parties?.... Democrats, Republicans and Independents.

The opening part of the INTERACTION dialogue is also conducted largely in the traditional convergent mode. The students are asked to give examples of class distinctions that exist here in the United States. Then they are asked to divide our society into economic groups that correspond to the levels of the Indian caste system.

There are no slides during this period of discussion.

The reader would be justified in thinking that the lesson thus far is unusual only in that the slide presentation has been used to accompany the lecture. The reader might further inquire why a teacher should expend a large amount of planning time to develop such a lesson. In short, wouldn't the conventional lesson get the job done just as well?

Teacher: What other ways do we use to categorize people?

Child: Sometimes religion.

Teacher: Religion. Okay, definitely religion. Although on job applications you can't ask for the applicant's religion. You can't ask that question because it may cover a hidden motive. Nevertheless, we apparently do have an interest in a person's religion. Of all the presidents we've had, only one was Catholic, President Kennedy. I'm not saying that it is right or wrong, but that has been the judgment people have made when they went to vote.

Child: Was Nixon Jewish?

Teacher: No, not that I know of.

Child: Age.

Teacher: Age, yes, okay. What else?

Child: Nationalities.

Teacher: Nationalities, certainly nationalities. We've got all these Polish jokes going around and (laughter) things like that.

Child: ....(inaudible)....

Teacher: Work? What one does for a living? Yes, and that would also relate to financial class, wouldn't it? Well..... those are samples. How many categories can we list under the financial category?

The evidence of the MOPPET program as well as the results of outside research tend to support the contention that when content is received through a combination of senses the retention is much better than when the lecture method alone is used. Thus, if better retention results from the more elaborately planned multi-media lessons, the teacher might expect to be compensated later when less review is necessary. Also, the overall learning process is strengthened when retention of subject matter is improved.

The efficient use of planning time is a very important consideration in MOPPET because the lessons require a great deal of planning. The fact that memorable lessons tend to be remembered is one of the obvious advantages. There is also the advantage that once a lesson is developed, it can be used in the future with a minimum of effort. In addition, it can be shared by other teachers, thus saving collective effort.

But, none of this really accounts for the differences between the present lesson and the original lesson plans shown earlier. Why does the teacher continue to tinker, so to speak, with a lesson that is already very serviceable? The answer is that the teacher has left the subject area per se and has entered into

Teacher: What would be the top group? If we were to make up a list, who would be at the top? Who would be the Brahmans in terms of our financial situation?

Child: The wealthy people.

Teacher: Wealthy. How wealthy? Give me a number.

Child: Millionaires.

Teacher: Millionaires. Okay, the top group would be the millionaires. Who would come next, what kind of people?

Children: (Mixed laughter and babble)

Teacher: No, we're going down to the bottom.

Children: Thousands....thousands.... thousandaires.

Teacher: Well, let's.... instead of going by numbers, after millionaires, let's go by groups.

Child: Middle class.

Teacher: You've got to have one higher than the middle class.

Child: Rich.

Teacher: Rich, upper. How about upper class? Rich, but not millionaires. Okay, then what?

Child: Middle.

Teacher: Middle class.

Children: Lower.

a creative exploration of the teaching process itself. Instead of receiving the lesson content as the primary criteria, the teacher is thinking of lesson content as a variable that may be handled this way or that, depending what has gone before, what goes with it, or, even better, where it is going. He's searching for a better way. It is when the teacher develops this kind of personal involvement with teaching a lesson that children too sense the importance and attend more and more in the manner of the teacher.

Teacher: Lower class.

Children: Then poor.

Teacher: Poor. What do you consider poor?

Child: Bankrupt.

Teacher: Do any of you know the governmental definition of poverty level? How much money can a family make in a year to be classified above the poverty level?

Children: ....(inaudible)....

Teacher: It is $3500.00. Okay. An average family, let's say of four people, with an income of $3500.00, technically that family is just above the poverty level.

Okay, so, you could make up a list of financial categories or income levels for our country.

Someone mentioned color. Yes, we categorize people by color. We shouldn't, but we do, even though it is prejudiced behavior. Alright.... Education. How about education? We classify people, as you know, in various categories in education. Dumb, dumber, (laughter) dumbest. Huh? Yes, college graduates are smart.

Okay.... so we agree that we do classify people. We have seen that the Hindu believes he can earn a better life.... but he must wait until he is reborn into a higher caste to receive it. Is that the way our class system works?

Children: No. Not exactly. You can be poor and get rich all in one life.

Teacher: That's the point to remember. In the United States, if you work hard you can move up from one class to another during your lifetime. It's even possible to go from the bottom to the top in one lifetime. You may have heard the phrase "rags to riches." Americans are basically optimistic about the opportunities in this life; the Indians are not.

Okay, now let's return to the area of reincarnation. ... Look up at the questions on the screen. I mentioned before that we should keep in mind that reincarnation is a major part of the Hindu religion. Let's quickly review what I said. What is the thought in terms of reincarnation in the caste system?

Child: That if you, um... if you were like you're untouchable, but just trying to do what is right, then you'll go into a higher notch.

Teacher: Okay.... It is the belief of the Hindu religion that no matter what group you are in, you will come back in the form of a higher class. The opposite would also be true. If you lead a bad life and you constantly complain, "This guy's got more than I do," or you engage in any of those activities that violate the rules of right thinking, of right conduct, and acceptance of your station in life without complaint....then you will come back, or your spirit will come back, in the form of a lower caste... or even an animal. Okay, so reincarnation is a very important part of the Hindu religion.

Later on, after I show you some slides showing samples of what other students have done, I will ask you to decide how you would like to be reincarnated.... if you were given the opportunity.

Children: (Mumbled discussion among themselves.)

Teacher: You will have complete freedom of choice. You can come back as a flower, an animal or whatever. Pick any of the things on the screen. You can make it an animal, plant, person.

Children: An elephant (laughter)..... (mixed discussion)

Child: Do we draw a picture too?

Teacher: Yes, you'll also draw a picture.

Children: (Discussion among themselves.)

Teacher: Okay..... Here are some samples done by my other class. Alright, we'll put those on.

Child: That's a gypsy. That's a gypsy.

Child: That's a good drawing.

Child: That is good.

Teacher: Okay.... These are samples of work done by people of your own age in my other classes. Some of them you know. I will not identify them. I probably can't remember who did them anyway..... So, take a look..... read....

At this point the INTERACTION dialogue has become divergent. The teacher has steered the emphasis away from the world of facts, and has centered it on the world of speculation--what does reincarnation mean for the individual?

Slides are shown which contain samples of work done by students from other classes. It will be observed that the students almost invariably make the process of reincarnation contemporary. They do not go backward in time, nor do they go outward to India. Nevertheless, they must go through the mental process of reviewing and reflecting on the INPUT of the lesson, and then of transporting the resulting understanding into the dimension of the personal. In a sense, by carrying through this creative part of the lesson, the students personalize the content as well as the process.

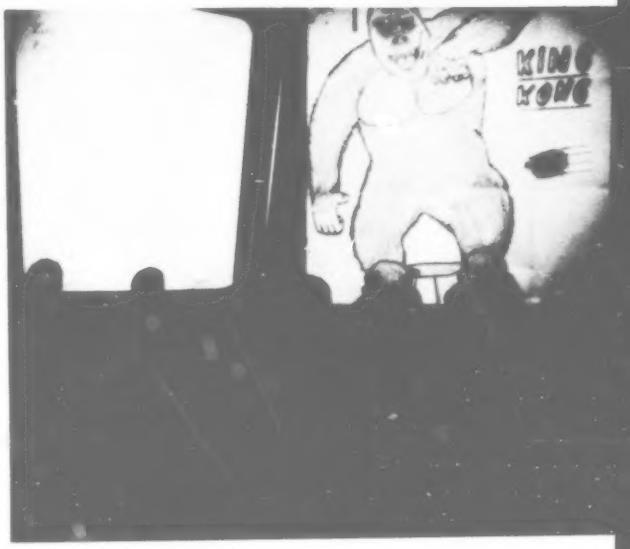
Teacher: Alright. So you see.... in order to reach the state of complete truth and reality called the world soul or Nirvana, the soul must be released from the bondage of rebirths and reincarnations. Any questions?

Child: How does he come back to life again?

Teacher: How can you? Whether you can or cannot depends on your belief.... just like any other religion. How do you know whether there's a heaven or hell? It's part of your up-bringing and you have to be the one to decide whether it really exists or not. Is there really life after death, as proclaimed by most of the many religions throughout the world? I don't think there is a religion in the world that doesn't profess to believe in some kind of life after death. Whether it's coming back in the form of another person, or a living creature, or having just a soul while the body is put away, or having the soul go on to another world.... to live either in peace or in torment.

Child: I read in a magazine that, um.... a boy twelve years old that died, he came back as a girl and the girl described everything to a "T" about her other life.

Teacher: There have been many cases, and they're constantly discovering more and more. There was a case in Canada where a lady claimed that she was somebody who had lived many years before. Later, under hypnosis she described the actual events. Um, I read to my other classes the story about a little girl who came back, uh,



Teacher: who said she was born several years ago.... and described her entire life...and said her husband tried to kill her and actually stabbed her. And her husband had an accident with a motorcycle. When they traced this back, (this happened in India), uh, when they traced this back, they found that it actually happened as it was told by the six year old girl. The man was then put in jail for murder. When they brought him into the room where the six year old girl was, she identified him exactly, and said that she was afraid of him because she still thought that he was going to kill her. When the man was interviewed by the press, and the Indian authorities, it was brought out that he had injured his leg in the motorcycle crash. Also, that he had been arrested for beating his wife. So, there must be some truth in these stories. Of course, if you have a really strong belief in reincarnation, it is probably because you were brought up to believe in it.

Child: There was this,... there was this lady and, uh... she was a man before.

Teacher: Anything else about the religions?.... Okay, we're going to spread out now. Right. I'm gonna give you paper and materials to work with. Draw me a picture, okay? Then on the back of it, come up with some kind of poem or lines that refer to the picture. Okay?.... Using the idea of what you would like to come back as.... if you had the opportunity. Animal, person, or plant.... You have complete freedom of choice. Give thought to it before you start. Don't take the paper and start doing just anything for sake of doing the assignment. Okay?.... Spread out, alright? Spread out along the wall. Take one and pass them around.

The lesson now enters the last activity, the EXPERIENCE, where the students synthesize what they have learned by joining the new knowledge together with their own personal views to form a unique statement.

The teacher chooses to have the students draw and write. Obviously, he could have chosen to have the lesson lead into creative drama, filmmaking, music or even movement.

Children: (Mumbled discussion about their topics. A lot of movement.)

Teacher: Here, use these things.... Everybody have paper? (Mumbling and inaudible discussions) If you have a book or something, put it down, do it on the floor or on top of there. Hold the paper anyway you want to. Make the picture as big as possible.

Children: (Speaking as a group among themselves while doing pictures.)

Teacher: (Helpful hints to students) Come on, let's go.... put something down there. What are you doing? Use some other colors.

Child: I want to come back as Mrs. Elton John.

Teacher: Go ahead, but you have to write about it, though. No, no, don't give me that--words to a song. (inaudible discussion) Write it in pencil so it won't come through. That's alright, draw a picture smaller, on the side. Yeah, that will be alright. I can read it.

Child: Hey, Mr. Tylicki, what would you like to come back as?

Teacher: King Tutt. (laughter) It seems many have identified me as such.

Children: (Speaking a group among themselves.)

Teacher: Cindy,do something instead of..... Come on, let's go. (more group talking) If the words are coming out on your drawing on the other side, just trace the drawing on the side where the words are.

Teacher: Is yours done?.... Do you want to read it and show it to the class so we can put it on the tape?.... While you're working on yours, give a listen to Jeff's over here.

Jeff: Ah, I gotta read it?

Teacher: Go ahead, read it. Go ahead, hold it up to read it. Come one.

Jeff: I would like to be a boy and live my life over again and be ever nicer and better than I was before.

Teacher: Good idea.

Children: A whistle. Refrain of "good kid."

Teacher: Put those markers in the box, alright.... when they're not being used?

Children: (Speaking as a group among themselves.)

Teacher: Anybody else finished, want to read theirs?

Children: (More speaking as a group among themselves.)

Teacher: Here's another one. (whistle) (snapping of fingers)

Child: A little kid. I would like to be a little kid. Small kid type, thick black hair. I'd like to be free, on my own and with no one to keep me from walking around.

Children: (More group discussion)

Teacher: Alright, put your name on what you have done so far, okay? We'll leave the pictures here, you'll get them back within the next couple of days.... All the markers in the box? The bus is here, let's get going. Put your name on the box. Put all the markers in the box.... Let's go, give me the pictures.... Pick up all these tiles. Put all the tiles together. And the markers just put in two boxes and consolidate them. Thank you.

We pointed out earlier that Mr. Tylicki combined his two original lesson plans into one. He also made large modifications through combining the cognitive content of the two lessons and by substituting art and writing for the original creative drama and poetry experiences.

We might speculate on the many possible reasons why Mr. Tylicki did this. For example, he may have wanted to see what the result would be if the content of the two lessons were combined in a more integrated way. However, if those changes were made, the short time remaining in the 45 minute period would make it impossible to finish a creative drama or a poetry experience. Thus the alternative of using a simpler art and writing experience probably appeared more practical in the new circumstances. It is possible that he may in the future decide to reinstate the second lesson, using movement, pantomime and drama to express the various reincarnation statements. Once the doors of the imagination are thrown open, the mind is forever searching for new and better ways.

The MOPPET process ultimately leads to an endless chain reaction of just this kind of exploration by the teacher. The teacher becomes more fully tuned in to the infinite possibilities that are present in all lessons. Thus the curriculum becomes alive because the teacher brings it to life--from his/her personal creative viewpoint.

The reader will now see why we are concerned with the creative growth of the teacher, and why we advocate that the teacher should depart from the "crutch" of the prototype lessons as soon as he/she feels able. This has nothing to do with comparisons of the quality of the prototype lessons with those of the teacher's own creation. The central point is that the teachers must embark on the creative venture in order to "learn the territory" of creative activities and thus be enabled to relate knowingly to the feelings and the products of the students. Such a teacher can be a true guide in the creative process.

In general we advocate that teachers do not grade MOPPET lessons. There are many who feel that an element of unfairness is involved in the practice of grading something as personal as one's artistic abilities or aesthetic consciousness. But the same charge could be made against grading one's intellectual abilities. However, in either case, grading carries a threatening, hence negative import. It also has the potential to distort one's self estimate. For these reasons we feel that it would be best not to grade MOPPET lessons at all.

At the elementary level it usually is easy for the classroom teacher to follow this course. However, in the highly structured and departmentalized situation existing in most secondary schools, it is frequently impractical to withhold a grade for any lesson project that has required

a great deal of class time--which is usually the case in MOPPET. Further, school policy often requires a certain number of grades. Thus, teachers are virtually forced to give grades for practically everything. Another relevant consideration involves the fact that grade consciousness is customarily so dominant in secondary schools that students are apt to look upon any activity that doesn't carry a grade as being unimportant. Consequently, we can only acquiesce to grades, but with the admonishment--be kind.

Summary: In the four lessons we have examined in Chapter II, we have attempted to go beyond the surface level of the activities in order to show how the MOPPET process is activated and used in the various disciplines. We selected lessons from kindergarten, 3rd, 5th and 7th grades. Naturally, the vocabulary and content were adjusted to the different age levels: however, the process remained the same in all cases, and, further, would remain the same even at the graduate or adult level. Thus, our emphasis on the importance of carrying out properly the three primary elements of a MOPPET lesson—INPUT, INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE—is based upon the essentiality of each to the creative process. Similarly, the divergent "drawing out" teaching style is also an essential element of the process, particularly in the INTERACTION and EXPERIENCE sections of the lesson.

If the teacher can train himself/herself to look into the complexities of a projected lesson and keep in mind the basic organizing criteria of INPUT, INTERACTION, EXPERIENCE and the "drawing out" teaching style, then the outlook for developing and teaching effective MOPPET lessons is very favorable.

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CHAPTER III

Teacher Training

ROLE OF CREATIVE EXPERIENCE

In Chapter I, we described the underlying theory of the MOPPET process, and in Chapter II we showed examples of how this theory can be translated into practice. However, there is yet a third experience that teachers will normally need in order to fully understand the process--they need to go through the creative experience themselves.

Most of us commonly associate the creative process with the arts, although, after reflection, we can often bring to mind outstanding individuals from other fields who are also obviously creative. Research makes it quite clear that creativity is in fact a generalized process that can be effectively applied in virtually all occupations.*

Our view in MOPPET coincides with this research established view that creativity is a process that may be activated in any area of endeavor. Our preference for the avenues of the arts is based upon our conviction that general education has been impoverished through the neglect of the arts. Thus, to link the arts to the standard subjects is the obvious way to increase the scope and depth of the overall curriculum.

The idea of separating the arts from general education has resulted in a situation where serious arts students have had to leave the mainstream of education in order to pursue an education in one or more of the arts. Consequently, along with their studies, they have usually absorbed a utilitarian, professional point of view. Conversely, the general population, having little of the insight resulting from such serious effort, have viewed the arts in superficial terms--as entertainment, or, in the context of education, as a frill. Neither arts professional nor average citizen has been able to look upon the arts as a vehicle of educational insight or as an important avenue of creative human expression. To oversimplify the situation for the sake of emphasis, the viewpoint of the general population toward the arts has been made up of the technically highly trained professional on the one extreme, and of the almost completely uninformed average citizen on the other. The middle ground--free of the exaggerations of both extremes--is only thinly inhabited.

When our founding fathers postponed the amen-

* For a description of what we consider generalized creative experiences, the reader may refer to the works of E. Paul Torrance and ... Guilford listed in our bibliography at the end of Chapter III.

ities of culture (which included the arts) during the bleak years of the Revolution and the nation building that followed, they made no provision for the fact that when they passed on, they would be replaced by generations who were unaware that anything of value was missing. When the arts reappeared in strength in America they appeared in specialized guises: the arts professionals, the small "elite" audience of the serious arts, and the mass "consumer" audience of popular or consumer art. Only a minority of people (whether artist or layman) was able to look beyond the superficial enjoyment aspect of the arts and perceive the deeper meanings and values to be gained through arts experience. Yet, spokesmen for this minority perception have been gaining an increasing influence in recent years due to their ability to supply a sane, balanced view on basic human problems.

This minority perception may be characterized as having a strong tendency to transcend the limits of any one art and take on a cultural and humanities orientation. Where such a broad orientation becomes a customary frame of reference, wherein all aspects of life are viewed from the criteria of humanism, we may properly say the person is "educated" in the highest sense of the term, regardless of a person's profession or station in life.

It goes far beyond the scope of this manual to offer a philosophical discussion of the foundations of the arts and humanities viewpoint on education. However, since the reader has proceeded this far in the exploration of MOPPET, we must assume that he/she is familiar with the general rationale supporting the movement to integrate the arts into the general curriculum of our schools. We assume also that the reader is familiar with the ever increasing support the humanistic movement is receiving from the sciences as well as from the arts. Therefore, we will concentrate on that aspect of the situation that is not common knowledge--how to integrate the arts into the curriculum.

To integrate the arts into the curriculum in any thorough going sense is impossible if arts specialists alone are involved. Thus the involvement of the general classroom teacher is imperative. It is at this point of the involvement of general subject area teachers that the problem of how becomes acute. The fact is that few general teachers have an extensive background in the arts.

Coincidentally, at this point two trends in current educational practice merge. The first trend is the arts and humanities movement we have been describing, which we have seen as a movement by the arts to merge with the general curriculum. The second trend could be seen as coming from the opposite direction--the efforts of the general curriculum areas to bring in the arts. This second trend has resulted from the relatively recent consensus that the "perfect" pedagogical method does not exist, that children differ so greatly that no one method can accommodate them all. Thus, regretfully per-

haps, the search for the holy grail of pedagogy has been abandoned, and educators have turned their attention to the most promising alternative--the development of what has been called the "multiple" methods approach.

Without going into the whole range of approaches that are possible under the "multiple" umbrella, we will confine our discussion to one aspect that particularly concerns us. In all likelihood there are few teachers or administrators nowadays who have not attended conferences and workshops that have encouraged the use of new methods and approaches. Again and again, the litany of new approaches has included: creative writing, role playing or drama, dance or movement, composing music, and filmmaking. These are all arts. Yet, the implication is that any teacher should be able to handle any or all of these activities with their present background, or at least with the addition of a very minimal "hands on" experience.

It is at this juncture that the arts and humanities and the multiple approaches concepts merge. The two trends have large areas of common or overlapping interests. Also, insofar as the arts are concerned, both trends are impeded in the carrying out of new teaching approaches by the same basic problem--the lack of an adequate understanding of the arts on the part of the classroom teacher.

Apparently few people in or out of education are aware that at its inception (approx. 1850) our traditional graded system had one cardinal virtue that overshadowed its defects--the economic fact that a teacher could be cheaply trained to be effective at a single grade level, provided, of course, that the range of subject matter to be covered was adequately matched with the training of the teacher. As we know, the training of teachers has been greatly strengthened in the intervening years. However, the incredible increase in knowledge during the same period has influenced teacher training along the lines of subject area specialization. Only in recent years has it become clear that teachers cannot be expected to absorb the full content of even one subject area. To this difficulty has been added, as we mentioned above, the difficulties involved in the multiple approaches; i.e., individualized instruction, team teaching, open classroom arrangements, interdisciplinary approaches, education by objectives, etc., etc. How is one to choose intelligently? In the meantime, the certainty exists in the back of our minds that good teachers have always been effective regardless of the pedagogical fashion of their times. Sooner or later the question has to be asked whether the answer to improved teaching lies in burdening teachers with more and more methodologies. For it would appear that MOPPET suggests yet another burden, and considering the difficulties involved in the arts, a great burden indeed.

The answer to the above question is that MOPPET training leads to personal growth in the teacher. Not just mastery of new teaching techniques, but personal growth. The teacher most go through the various creative experiences in MOPPET training and therein become acquainted with his/her own creativity. For ultimately, to recognize the creative artist in the child, the teacher must first become acquainted with the creative artist in himself/herself. This kind of experience adds a dimension to the teacher's understanding that is quite different from the mastery of technique and content. In our opinion, it is in this area of personal understanding that the so-called great teacher has always excelled. This superior insight has enabled the great teacher to rise above the limitations of the pedagogical systems in which he/she worked.

For this reason, we do not feel that the kind of training that will be described later in this chapter constitutes the mere adding of another relatively thankless chore to the already crowded regime of the teacher. On the contrary, we believe that through lightening the spirit we can relieve much of the sense of burden that teachers normally struggle under.

To summarize the role of MOPPET teacher training, it is designed to humanize the curriculum primarily through adding the humanistic dimension to the teacher's range of options. By this, we mean that by personally undergoing training involving both the theory and the experience of creativity, the teacher will gain a conscious awareness of the need for creative expression in the lives of children.

MOPPET training emphasized the creative process as it works in the arts because the arts contain vitally important avenues of expression that are not presently a part of the standard curriculum in most school systems. This does not mean that teachers must always confine their lessons in creativity to activities involving the arts. However, our view takes into account that each of the arts has its unique features, and a generalized training in the creative process does not guarantee that the teacher will then be able to apply the process to the arts. The fact is that many excellent classroom teachers look with awe at what appears to them to be the mysteriousness of the arts. Therefore, we should not presume that they will proceed into the arts world without assistance.

Finally, the understanding received through MOPPET training will enable teachers to deal, not only with MOPPET lessons per se, but also with the interdisciplinary process. In addition, the kind of frame of reference that MOPPET requires will enable teachers to cope more intelligently with the maze of new "multiple" approaches. In short, the MOPPET training should lead to a general increase in insight and ability that should benefit teachers in all their endeavors.

WOODBRIDGE TEACHER TRAINING 1970-76

In-service training for teachers has been an important part of the MOPPET project from its beginning in 1970. The early workshops and in-service courses were developed along conventional lines. We made presentations describing the theory, purposes and methodology of the program; we gave in-service workshops ranging in length from an hour or two to those spaced over several months; we utilized team teaching and outside consultants; we tried combining all the MOPPET disciplines in one workshop, and we tried workshops devoted exclusively to one discipline.

In the Woodbridge system we worked with teachers in all of the 22 local elementary schools. Our initial view was that repeated exposure to the program would over time lead to ever increasing understanding until finally the program would be absorbed. To achieve this, we started with program orientation, and then proceeded to demonstrations, and later to working with teachers in the classroom. The final stage was achieved when teachers could write and teach their own lessons that effectively contained the MOPPET process.

None of our in-service experiences was bad in the sense of being poorly received. On the contrary, the response was enthusiastic. The problem was that we did not often have the opportunity to go through all the stages of exposure, demonstration, involvement and eventual mastery. In the course of this time consuming training process we lost most of our in-service teachers before they reached the final stage of mastery. Even more troubling was our inability to get beneath the surface aspects of the program and make contact with the creative side of the participants.

On the whole we were not happy with the results we received in those early years of the program. If the program had ended after the initial three years of funding under ESEA Title III, it is likely that we never could have satisfactorily worked out the problems of teacher training. However, the school system adopted the elementary program in 1973 and assumed the salaries of several staff members. At that time the program also received some Title III dissemination funds as a result of the validation of MOPPET as successful, cost-effective and exportable by the standards and guidelines of the United States Office of Education. In addition, the program received a Title III grant to work at the junior high school level with particular emphasis on the drop-out prone. The support from these sources enabled the project to retain the MOPPET staff and to continue working on the problems of development. Thus, the early years of the program were taken up primarily with the development of the lesson process and secondarily with the problem of teacher training. By 1973, the situation had become reversed: the problem of teacher train-

ing became primary, and the lesson development activities became secondary.

In the summer of 1974, we were able to hold a two week teacher training workshop for 25 junior high teachers and administrators. This was the first time that we were able to expose teachers to the full range of MOPPET activities in the manner that the children experience it. In fact, a nucleus of students was recruited to go through the workshop with the teachers to further authenticate the process. Briefly, the participants went through three experiences daily in three different MOPPET disciplines. The next day they went through three more, and so forth, until they had gone through five experiences in each of the six disciplines during the two week workshop period.

The results constituted a turning point in the progress of the MOPPET program. From within the creative experience itself the workshop participants were making the kinds of responses and producing the kinds of personal statements and products that revealed a private awakening to the reality of the creative process. Also, they became aware of the dynamic way the arts reinforce one another when used in such an interdisciplinary way. In short, those dimensions of the program that cannot be conveyed adequately in words became clear through the experience.

In a sense that workshop was ideal: the instructors were all experienced MOPPET teachers who had a consistent philosophy and worked well together. This situation enabled the participants to go from one discipline to another without encountering conflicting philosophies and demands. It also helped the participants' understanding to have frequent projects where more than one art was involved. The workshop is described on the following pages.

movement

art

music

400

Shallow people frequently (and usually in exasperation) refer to creative artists as children. However, their pique can usually be traced to an inability to secure obedience or agreement from the artist; so the frustrated one retaliates by characterizing the artist's behavior as childish and therefore irresponsible, etc. Whereas the fact is that the demands of art require an exceptional degree of organization and responsibility. The ability to respond to life in a childlike manner is one of the artist's indispensable tools, one that must be preserved at any cost.

So it is with all of us. When we suppress our ability to view the world with the creative wonder of the child, we turn our backs on our most precious birthright--our creative ability--and also our last link with the innocence that gives rise to true objectivity.

exploring the arts

art

movement

film

Teacher training in the arts that attends exclusively to the cultivation of skills can do little to reintroduce the teacher to the artist in him/her. Also, the pursuit of one art does little to familiarize us with the other arts, which is necessary to open the door to interdisciplinary insights. For these reasons the MOPPET workshops structure creative arts experiences in which the different disciplines follow one another. In time the commonalities in the arts blend in the teachers' minds.

The workshops illustrated on these pages took teachers through three different arts experiences each day for two weeks. At the conclusion of the two weeks the participants had received five experiences in each of the disciplines included in the MOPPET program; music, art, poetry, creative drama, movement and filmmaking.

drama

Artists themselves frequently refer to their artistic ability as being in essence the ability to instantly retrieve childhood. They are not talking about regression into childishness; they are talking about the necessity of preserving and keeping near at hand the open access to their own creative fountains....so marked in young children, but, tragically, so seldom preserved in adults.

Since creative ability is the primary tool of the artist, he/she sensibly goes to great lengths, sometimes even bizarre lengths, to preserve that ability into adulthood. The rest of us lacking such exceptional motivation, usually suppress or surrender that part of ourselves in order to pursue ends that society presents as being more important.

Because of neglect our precious creativity may be forced to lie dormant, it may even atrophy to an extent, but--it does not die. MOPPET teachers training is intended to reawaken the creative artist in the teacher.

When the interdisciplinary connections begin to emerge it becomes a natural thing to develop lessons that simultaneously involve two or more arts or that move naturally out of one arts experience into another. For the teacher of the arts, this can be an enriching new experience that leads ultimately to the realization that the arts are more than merely related--when they are merged they reinforce and enrich one another.

The picture on this page illustrates the merging of the arts. The teachers are working with a variety of art materials and musical instruments--which will lead to collages with appropriate musical accompaniments.

The following page reflects on the fact that art is a serious business. Everyone needs to know that his/her personal statements are accepted. Teachers need to learn this through personal experience in order to be enabled to appreciate similar feelings in children.

listen

to yourself

shh..... listen

to yourself

shh..... listen

to yourself

you'll love yourself

shh..... listen

to yourself

do you scream

go ahead

yes

listen

to yourself

to who

I can't hear my voice

to who

no one will love me

to who

what about the others

to who

no, not in years; I have to again

will it be alright

to who

STAFFING MOPPET WORKSHOPS

Some readers may be disturbed over the question of who should lead MOPPET type workshops. The descriptions given so far have strongly implied that the instruction should be given by teachers of the arts; whereas, in reality, any teacher who understands the creative process can apply it to his/her discipline and can also instruct others in the process. However, in this connection we remind the reader that our emphasis on the arts is based upon the fact that they are major avenues of communication and expression that are normally closed to the great majority of students. In most school systems only those who deliberately choose to pursue one or more of the arts are able to receive a significant arts background. A good, broad interdisciplinary background in the arts is often impossible. This is true primarily because the majority of the educational community as well as the public have never experienced such education and are not aware of its value.

Therefore, our use of teachers of the arts as instructors in our workshops has been based upon our desire to develop an interdisciplinary arts methodology that had genuine aesthetic merit, but which could also be handled technically by the classroom teacher. Since the 1974 summer workshop described above, a number of classroom teachers have sufficiently mastered the process so that they have been enabled to give presentations, demonstration lessons and instruction to fellow teachers. The process does transfer from arts teachers to classroom teachers.

We have reservations about the exclusive use of non-artist teachers to instruct in the initial stages of a MOPPET type program. At that time there is a great need for the judgment of an experienced artist in the development of high quality arts experiences that do not require extensive arts technique. When the classroom teacher is exposed to this high quality, then he/she too will gradually develop aesthetic judgment.

There is one aspect of the teacher of the arts that should be discussed in some detail. It should not be taken for granted that all such teachers are sympathetic with, or even personally familiar with the creative process. A first rate craftsman can be a very successful practitioner and teacher in the arts without having any real understanding of the creative process. This is true because all arts contain both the creative and recreative aspects. For example, to compose as Beethoven did, one must necessarily be highly creative. However, to perform his symphonies the members of the orchestra need not be creative provided they are highly skilled at recreating. So it is with all the arts, and this holds true in the teaching branches of the arts also. Thus it should not be surprising to discover arts teachers who possess a very high level of craftsmanship, but who

at the same time show no interest whatever in programs that emphasize the creative process, such as MOPPET.

This is why the proper staffing of a MOPPET training workshop necessitates that the teachers of the arts understand and support the basic tenet of making the creative process paramount. In order for them to properly make such a commitment it is necessary that they understand that it is their aesthetic judgment and insight that is most needed, and not their technical craftmanship. An arts teacher who does not understand this is most likely to proceed with the development of lessons and techniques that require a high degree of technical expertise, an expertise that the general classroom teacher does not have. The arts teacher who is basically a craftsman only is almost certain to follow this course. The customary result is that the classroom teacher cannot use such a methodology. Therefore, we repeat, in staffing a MOPPET training workshop it is important that the teachers of the arts must be conversant with and sympathetic to the objectives of the program.

Almost certainly the reader has already given some thought to the question of who should direct such a program--an artist, or a person representing the standard subject areas. The answer is that a good understanding of both areas is necessary. It is possible to find individuals who are sufficiently knowledgeable in both areas to take on the responsibility for directing all aspects of MOPPET training. However, people of such broad background are rare. A more practical solution is to delegate the leadership roles in such a way that both the arts and the standard curriculum viewpoints will be effectively represented.

Something of this kind was achieved in the original MOPPET project in Woodbridge. The writer, a former music teacher, originated and directed the program. However, it soon became obvious that someone was needed who could evaluate the program's lessons from the standpoint of the classroom teacher. In the second year, Mrs. Rosemarie Mazzeo joined the project as assistant director and curriculum specialist. Mrs. Mazzeo had been a 3rd grade teacher for many years, and later became the science coordinator for the school system. Basically, she has performed the function of making sure that MOPPET lessons are both understandable and usable by the general classroom teacher. Therefore, although the project staff has been made up primarily of artists, in the process of developing the methodology, lessons and products have been evaluated from the criteria of usefulness to the general classroom teacher.

SUPPORT FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY PROCESS

If this manual is successful, the reader will see that our ultimate curriculum concern is with the area between the arts curriculum and the general curriculum--the area in which the interdisciplinary connections must be made. In this interdisciplinary area, formulations and realizations occur that none of the separate disciplines can bring about alone. The integration of the ingredients that occur in this in-between area is by no means a mere enrichment process. Instead, it is a formulation process out of which basic insights emerge, insights of the kind that result in a balanced view.

To our mind, the coupling of the interdisciplinary process and the creative arts process results in an experience of the highest quality the individual is capable of. The reason for this is that the rational, cognitive faculty is joined by the intuitive and aesthetic faculties to fully mobilize the individual. Among the emotions evoked by MOPPET lessons is that of pleasure, for it is true that self-fulfilling expression is pleasureful. But we should not on that account be deceived into believing that this activity is therefore mere fun. For in the long run, the strength of insight resulting from the cumulative effect of such rich experiences (including pleasure) must certainly give the individual a broader, deeper base from which to think.

This area is relatively strange to most teachers, both in their educational experiences and in their training for teaching. Thus, they lack an experiential frame of reference from which to judge the kind of interdisciplinary creative experience described in MOPPET. As we suggested earlier in this chapter, teachers must themselves go through the creative experience to become acquainted with the living process.

It would seem that a knowledge of the MOPPET process should be sufficient to enable teachers to go ahead and modify their own teaching method sufficiently to do the program effectively. Unfortunately, this is seldom the case. The truth seems to be that nearly all of us first learn the traditional authoritarian teaching process in the course of our own education as students. Later, we reproduce the process in our own teaching--improved versions perhaps, but essentially the same approach. Frequently we consciously change our approach in surface ways, but underneath it all we preserve our security through clinging to the familiar process. We do not see a new program as involving only a new dimension which we can add to what we already know; i.e., we do not view the teaching process in abstract, intellectual terms. We literally teach emotionally--what we are. Thus,

when we are asked to change styles (even for a class period), we interpret it as a request to change what we are. The reader may persist in asking why this should be so threatening. The answer is that the traditional method does not allow the teacher to fail. In the current period of extreme emphasis on accountability, on evaluation through tight supervision, performance objectives, et al., we can hardly expect teachers to view anything new with confidence. We might feel safe with something that is only a modification of what we are already doing, but a new method that goes as far afield as the MOPPET process, one that in certain basic respects is literally the opposite of what we are accustomed to--this can be threatening indeed.

For this reason a first principle for MOPPET teacher training is to give the teacher the right to fail. The word "exploration" from the MOPPET acronym implies a trial and error approach to the unknown. However, in addition to a rhetorical allowing for failure, we have found that it is also very important to provide a guide, someone who has gone through the process of exploration and who can offer advice and support to the teacher when failure actually does occur.

This leads us to the heart of the MOPPET teacher training process. It is all well and good to produce lessons and training manuals, give demonstration lessons, give in-service workshops and courses, etc. However, if we are serious about teacher change, then we must realistically face the fact that change is difficult, and most teachers will not undertake it without help--human help, something beyond the provider of the materials and methodology. In short, instructional leaders are needed whom teachers can talk to and have confidence in.

We referred earlier to the MOPPET interdisciplinary workshop that we held in the summer of 1974. That workshop was described as a turning point in our teacher training because, for the first time, we were able to involve teachers in the creative experience. That led to great teacher enthusiasm and a desire to transfer the creative process to their own classrooms. However, when the teachers set out to work alone, most of them soon ran into difficulties. The process looks easy when it is handled by an experienced teacher, but it isn't. Teachers could not answer their own questions: How do you deliberately generate ideas? How do you shape ideas? What criteria do you use in selecting the mode for the media presentation? What is the appropriate level of difficulty for a first experience in creative drama? How do you talk to children to "draw them out?" How do you operate a camera? How can you tell which lesson form to use? How can you integrate the arts with math? The questions are very numerous and range from the very simple to the complex and sophisticated.

The emergence of such practical problems tends

to dull teachers' enthusiasm and dampen their appetite for the new process. Thus in the MOPPET program the instructional leaders should be prepared to meet such problems and to offer assistance as it is needed.

In addition to curriculum questions, teachers are also concerned about problems of class management in the strange new format. The control and teaching of thirty or more children is a very difficult business under any circumstances, and teachers tremble at the prospect of tampering with a workable method, even though they may be dissatisfied with it. Therefore, teachers needed assurance as well as technical help.

The children have almost certainly been conditioned to expect a certain kind of lesson and to react within a certain range of acceptable behavior. How can teachers maintain control of the situation when they open the Pandora's box containing a strange new lesson that calls for a strange new behavior format? Perhaps more than failure in terms of lesson structure or content, teachers fear loss of control. Therefore, they feel a need to know how to handle the freer behavior of the children that the process calls for.

At a deeper level, we must recognize that security and confidence are not completely a matter of professional skill or competence. Each teacher is a human being, and each is <u>different</u>. Each of us has strengths and weaknesses, therefore the exact manner of entry into the MOPPET process will vary from teacher to teacher. One may wish to see a great many observations before he/she feels secure in making an initial personal effort. Another may wish to team teach for awhile. Still another may want to rush in headlong before he/she has learned to operate the involved A-V machines. And then there are those who feel they have no talent at all, etc.

The instructional leadership must be able to meet all these situations in a constructive manner. Needless to say, no leader can hope to offer solutions to all problems. But they can solve some; in other cases they can suggest someone else who can help; and there are other problems that cannot be solved immediately, where the best we can do is offer encouragement and show confidence in the teacher. The net effect is to take teachers out of the customary isolation in which they work and to shoulder some of the responsibility for their success and failure.

What we have been describing is a new situation for the teacher where the customary security mechanism is relaxed or removed. This is usually true in innovative situations. Consequently, there is an increased need for supportive leadership. In our system, this leadership normally comes from the principal. However, in MOPPET it is quite likely that the principal may not be the person best qualified to give the kind of technical curriculum help that is needed.

It is likely that some kind of structure of team leadership will be necessary in order to give teachers the kind of support they will need at the different levels. The point we are trying to bring out is that, regardless of the structure of leadership that is decided on, there must be someone that the teacher can talk to and confide in. Thus, when they discuss their ideas and plans they may do so openly so that they may come out from behind their strengths and reveal their doubts and weaknesses as well. For it is in the area of these weaknesses and doubts that much of the crucial work must be done. Therefore the teacher has need for both technical help and emotional support. These supports may come partly from the principal and partly from the supervisor, team leader, area specialist, head of library and media, etc. But most important is the fact that someone from this group must have the time to talk and plan with the teachers.

A word should be said about the principal. In our scheme of education there is no doubt that the principal is the dominant figure in the eyes of the teachers. In MOPPET, the principal need not be the leader as far as technical expertise or curriculum development is concerned. However, it is essential that he/she understand the needs of the program and actively support the team. In an innovation, where positive support is needed, neutrality or indifference on the part of the principal is equivalent to being negative.

A discussion of support for the interdisciplinary process must inevitably involve certain modifications at the administrative level, because traditional administration and supervision have been developed to support traditional practice where the primary emphasis has been on the support of the separate disciplines. Therefore, in order to expand interdisciplinary practice in the classroom, the approach must first be provided for at the administrative level. We feel that teachers have been too much maligned for their failures to make desirable interdisciplinary connections between their own and other disciplines. The fact is that this is extremely difficult to do in the isolated situations where teachers typically work. It appears to us that when the proper supportive conditions are created, teachers are quite capable of working with one another and of making the necessary connections.

WORKSHOPS OUTSIDE WOODBRIDGE

No two school systems are identical either in circumstances or in personnel. Therefore, when dealing with the MOPPET methodology, it is unlikely that any format we could devise would be practicable in other places without considerable modification. We described earlier the summer workshop for junior high school teachers that we held in Woodbridge in the summer of

1974. That workshop was ideal from the standpoint of having a well trained staff who could effectively take the participants through the full range of six MOPPET disciplines over a two week period. Unfortunately, we have not been able to duplicate that exact format in other school systems. However, as part of our dissemination agreement under ESEA Title III, we have developed effective workshops and other activities for outside school systems who wish to adopt MOPPET. These workshops and activities have been divided into three levels in such a way as to preserve the essential elements of MOPPET teacher training.

Level I is concerned primarily with giving an overview of MOPPET. Activities include presentations, visitation to the project for observation and mini-workshops, and examination of free project material.

Level II is designed for those educators who are familiar with the introductory experiences of Level I and who wish to acquire the MOPPET lesson materials and go on to explore the project in greater depth. (Reading this manual is a Level II experience.) The main focus of Level II is on the intern workshops. These are held during school hours for visiting teams of three to five persons, who may represent the areas of administration (preferably a principal), supervision, arts specialists, library and media specialists and, of course, classroom teachers. The reason for having a team approach is to create a climate of knowledgeable interaction so that teachers will receive a high level of interested support when they implement the program.

The workshops include the kind of in-depth experiences that we described as being the crucial element of the 1974 summer workshop; i.e., the participants take part in three different disciplines each day. In the summer workshop we had ten workshop days over a two week period. However, we found that it was impossible for outside participants to get excused ten times from their school systems, so we limited the Level II workshops to five days spread over five weeks. This was a compromise, but it worked out quite well because the participating school systems were making a substantial commitment and the participants themselves were highly motivated.

The Level III activities are for those who have gone through Levels I and II and consequently have started to adopt MOPPET in their own school system. Level III activities are somewhat open-ended and flexible so that the particular needs of the adapting districts can be met. The activities include up to three consultations, workshops or demonstrations by members of the MOPPET staff in the adopting school system. The adopting system may feel a strong need for assistance in a given area such as: A-V technology, a particular discipline such as creative drama, or they may need advice in the

development of a MOPPET facility or in the development of lesson kits. These services are in the nature of follow-up support that are scheduled when needed. It is also highly desirable for the adopting district to institute some kind of appropriate evaluation that will yield data on the effectiveness of the program in carrying out the local system's objectives.

I. Wayne, New Jersey . . . . . An adoption of MOPPET is currently taking place in the elementary schools of Wayne, New Jersey. In that situation a team of Wayne personnel attended the Level I and II activities and workshops in Woodbridge. The team was made up of a principal, a language arts leader, an art teacher and a communication arts teacher.

After completing Level II, they invited Mrs. Mazzeo and the writer to observe a MOPPET in-service workshop for the elementary teachers of Wayne. The following pages describe that in-service workshop which took place on April 17, 1975. The workshop presentations and activities were all conducted entirely by Wayne personnel.

MOPPET WORKSHOP - Wayne, N.J. - April 17, 1975 - 1:30 P.M. - Approximately 30 Participants

Workshop Leaders

(left to right)
Lawrence Tilli, Principal
Sal Buda, Art
Keven Vaughn, Communications
Thelma Molk, Language Arts

Introduction - Lawrence Tilli

Orientation - Thelma Molk

It is explained that the participants will be given the same kind of experience that children go through in MOPPET.

Explanation is made about the services given by MOPPET staff.

Presentation of conceptual model of MOPPET lesson process is made on overhead projector with accompanying explanation.

Slide Presentation - Sal Buda

Slide presentation with music accompaniment.....

Participants are invited to jot down anything that occurs to them during course of presentation. Discussion of reactions to presentation. Break up into groups of 5--decide on one idea in each group and develop a dramatic scheme which the group will act out in pantomime or other dramatic form.

General attitude of indifference, of isolation conveyed by presentation is depicted in pantomime of first group. Group is indifferent to the plight of the stricken individual. (Some participants did not get that kind of feeling from presentation.)

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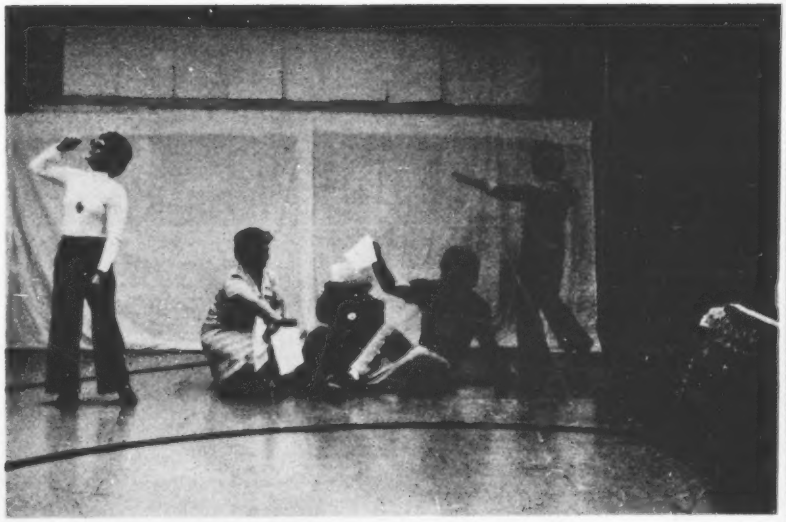
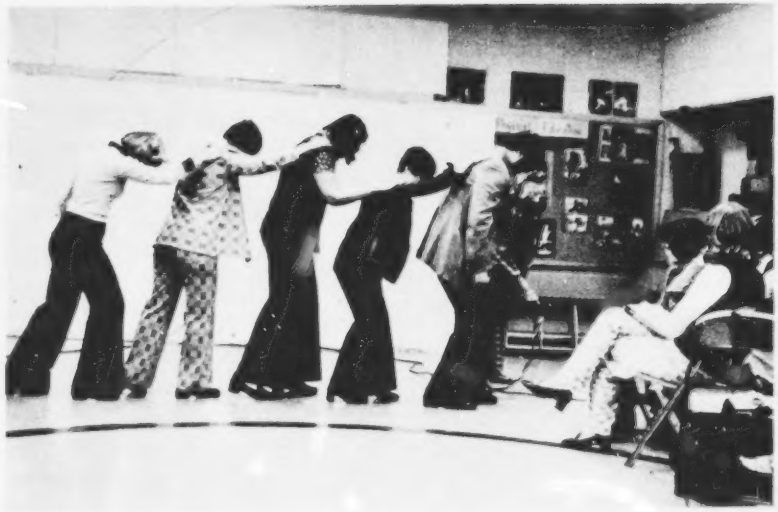
Second group presents very elaborate and free pantomime conveying their impression of the joys of traveling and serenity which they derived from presentation. (Clearly much different from first presentation.)

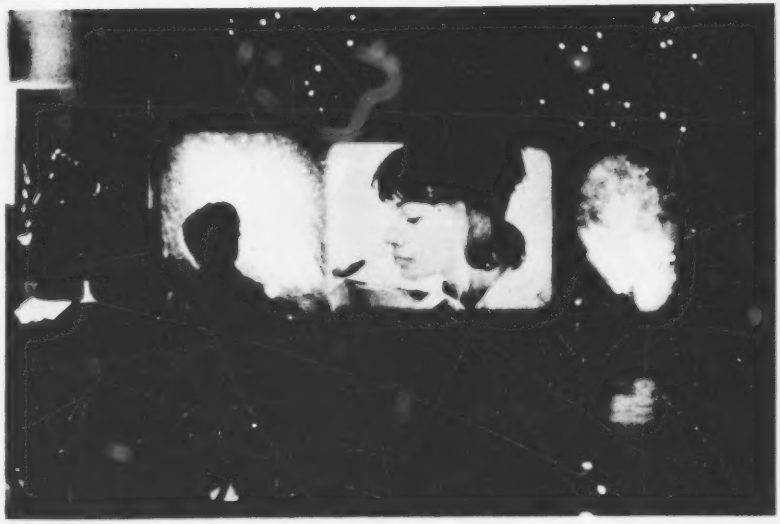


Third group extremely somber, circular pantomime depicting isolation of everyone. They all act alike to show universality of that feeling. (Again very sad.)

Fourth group depicts feeling of confinement, in line as in a chain gang, also conformity of group and subservience to jailor or fate. (Again very sad feeling.)

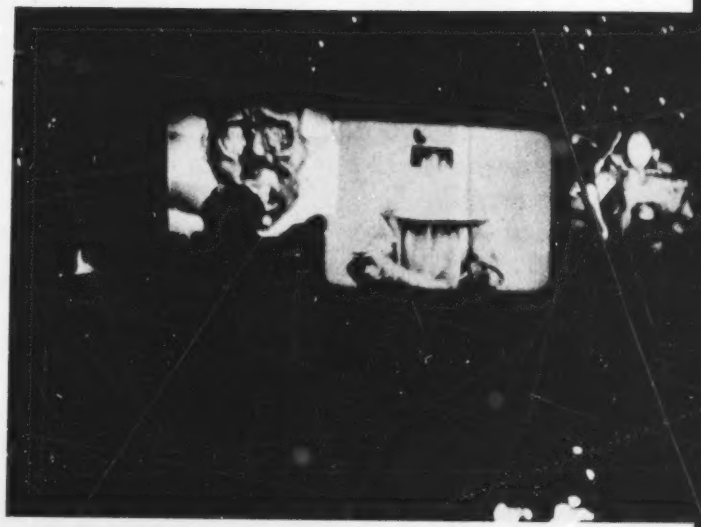


The original slides are shown again, this time with a somewhat more optimistic music accompaniment. Overheads of poems are shown between the slides and are read so words synchronize with the slides. Extremely well organized and imaginative.



Third slide presentation presents the cold indifference of the modern age. The people are so isolated from true human form that they themselves are more caricatures of robots than of humans. Largely abstract or driving soundtrack reinforces the nervous, busy indifference and on-goingness of whole enterprise. Dali type slides are particularly effective. Butterfly motif is reversed when costumed man-robot stops machine and releases butterfly from its captivity. But it meant little since butterfly ends up pinioned alive to page of specimens. In short, we may grant temporary reprieves, but we set no one free today.

In the end, history and nature are shown to be larger than all this, which is reassuring and positive. The changing of emphasis through changing the musical background and the order of the visuals demonstrates how material can be altered to serve different objectives. It also illustrates that, depending on your interests, different people may react with interest or horror to the same scenes.



Movement - Keven Vaughn and Sal Buda

In the movement activity each participant selects a percussion instrument. The participants are numbered 1 through 8 and each will make his/her sound on cued count. Those who don't mind moving volunteer to form a group to demonstrate movement responses to rhythms produced on instruments. Eight participants make shapes, mostly one at a time. There is great individuality in variety of shapes assumed, yet appropriate to accompaniment. Leaders explain additional possibilities; however, they do this only through suggestion and not through example or demonstration. Suggestions are in turn carried out in action.

Lesson Development - Thelma Molk

Lesson plans are shown of slides for the lessons "Loneliness-Trapped"and "Space." Then slide presentations belonging to the two lessons are shown. A blank lesson plan form is also distributed to give master format.

More slides are shown with Debussy music illustrating how tranquil music powerfully reinforces landscape and nature scenes. Directions are given on availability of films and other materials to enable participants to develop their own lesson materials.

Film is shown between slides of nature, but it blends in so perfectly that at times one is not conscious that the slides remain still while the film moves. The film soundtrack need not be used if the teacher wishes to turn off sound and substitute another soundtrack. Again, extremely well organized. The slides obviously were synchronized thoughtfully with the film and music. In a sense, one could say such a presentation is composed.

Distribution of list of seven MOPPET lessons developed by Wayne teachers that are available to local teachers. (List is shown on right side of page.)

MOPPET SLIDE PRESENTATIONS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

1. Winter
2. Space
3. Fairy Tales
4. The Sea (optional film, The Sea, Encyc. Brit., Wayne Public Lib.)
5. Loneliness, Trapped
6. Haunted
7. Spring (optional film, Spring Comes to the Pond, Wayne Media Cent.)

Lesson Development - Sal Buda

Describes how to make transparencies of simple cloud shapes taken from book It Looked Like Spilt Milk. Examples of art products resulting from a lesson using these materials are shown. The text of the book was read onto a cassette track so the teacher needs only move the transparencies on and off the overhead as the story progresses. It is explained how in nice weather children can be taken outside, lie down to look at sky, and write about what they see or feel.

Mr. Tilli described what went into the presentations, the cost, etc. At 4:00 P.M. he closes the workshop.

Excellently prepared workshop, conducted with skill and enthusiasm. Demonstrates that process has transferred, and that local leaders are able to make their own adaptations and extensions of MOPPET. There is interest and enthusiasm at all levels: principals, leaders and teachers.

This is an example at a successful in-service workshop that reflects the ability of school systems to adapt MOPPET in their own way and to develop their own materials and facilities.

The workshop took place in April of the adopting year, and it displays that the nucleus of team leaders have already assimilated the MOPPET process sufficiently that they are able to teach it. As they progress they will become aware of the problem areas where the MOPPET staff can be of further assistance (Level III).

MOPPET adoptions characteristically follow this course of gradual development. The transfer process requires time. Mastery at one level forms the groundwork for entry into successively higher levels until the entire process has been acquired. This normally takes about two years.

II. Related Arts in Education Project, Pennsylvania. . . . . Another kind of MOPPET teacher training workshop took place at the Lehigh County Community College, in Pennsylvania in July, 1975. That workshop was sponsored by the Related Arts in Education Project, an ESEA Title III project in the Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit (an educational subdivision in eastern Pennsylvania containing two counties). A copy of the announcement for that workshop follows:

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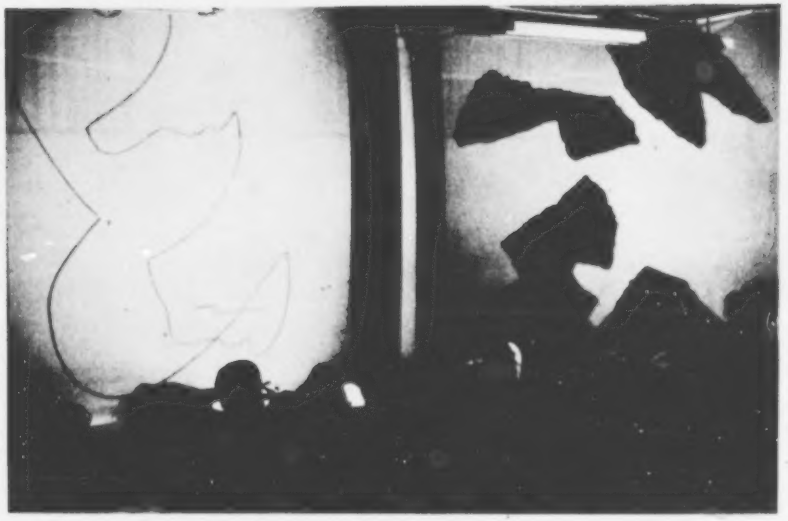
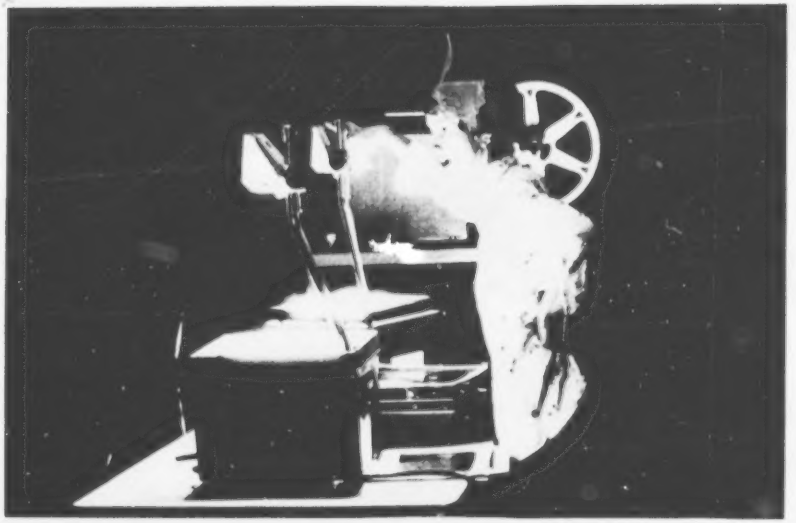
The distance from eastern New Jersey to eastern Pennsylvania made it difficult for Pennsylvania personnel to take part in the Level II and III activities conducted in Woodbridge. However, they did send people for two days to thoroughly explore MOPPET from the standpoint of Level I orientation. Plans for the later workshop in Pennsylvania grew out of those Level I experiences.

Participation of the MOPPET staff in the Pennsylvania workshop was also limited by the distance involved. Because of previous commitments it was not possible for teachers from all six MOPPET disciplines to take part. However, four (poetry, creative drama, movement and music) taught in the workshop for two days each. (We consider four disciplines to be the minimum number necessary to provide a good interdisciplinary experience.) Also, Mrs. Mazzeo and the writer conducted a one day orientation. The schedule that was developed called for the MOPPET staff to spend the first week instructing the participants, and then, during the second week, for the participants to use their understanding of the new process in developing appropriate classroom lesson materials.

During the first week the participants were divided into two groups. On Monday and Tuesday the MOPPET poetry and movement teachers taught each group twice, once in the A.M. and again in the P.M. On Wednesday the writer did a presentation on the theory of MOPPET and in the afternoon Mrs. Mazzeo did an illustrated presentation on the lesson development process. On Thursday and Friday, the creative drama and music teacher repeated the A.M. and P.M. teaching schedule followed earlier by the poetry and movement teachers. Thus the participants received sixteen lesson experiences (four in each of the four disciplines), and a day of orientation to the theory and lesson development process. Some of the activities of the first week are described on the following pages.





The facility pictured is a teaching room in the Lehigh County Community College. Most of the furniture was removed and the windows well covered so the room could be adequately darkened. The curved "screen" is a long expanse of white cloth that covers the entire side of the room. Inexpensive but effective.

Each group received four lessons daily on Monday and Tuesday, receiving a poetry and a movement lesson in the morning session and again in the afternoon session. There were, of course, detailed explanations of the rationale supporting the lessons, but otherwise the lessons were taught in the same manner as they are done with children.

In the pictures, MOPPET movement teacher, Marian Carter, leads a group through the media INPUT, INTERACTION dialogue and EXPERIENCE.

In another room MOPPET poetry teacher, Bette Distler, works with the other group. It would have been more desirable if all four of the involved disciplines could have been scheduled over the entire week, instead of having two on Monday and Tuesday and the other two on Thursday and Friday. But, as we stated earlier, the workshop format was the best compromise we could work out in the circumstances. As it turned out, the workshop was very successful.

When the original project started in Woodbridge, we had four arts disciplines represented in the program. Later we were able to increase the number to the present total of six. Ideally we would like to include even more. However, adopting districts are always more interested in the minimum number necessary for

a beginning program. We recommend that they try to include at least four in order to provide for a good interdisciplinary experience.

In any case, it is most important that the leaders in each discipline thoroughly understand the process involved. Thus it is preferable for an adopter to plan for a workshop containing the recommended minimum of four disciplines if that is the largest number that can be staffed with effective leaders. The alternative of offering the largest possible number of disciplines regardless of the quality of the leadership is apt to result in confusion on the part of the participants.

In the above pictures the writer is shown giving a media and lecture demonstration on the theory of the MOPPET lesson process. This was followed by a slide/lecture demonstration in which the theoretical lesson model was related to the various disciplines: music, art, creative drama, movement, poetry and filmmaking. These presentations included the bulk of the orientation and theoretical background needed to enter into the MOPPET experience. These activities were done in the morning of the Wednesday workshops.

In the afternoon session, Mrs. Rosemarie Mazzeo presented a rich variety of A-V and other materials from various MOPPET lessons. She explained the process through which MOPPET lessons are developed from germinal idea to the final teaching of the lesson. The MOPPET lesson development process is too complex to cover in a single workshop session, but this session served to motivate the participants to start thinking about ideas they could develop into lessons during the following week.

Thursday and Friday were devoted to lessons in music and creative drama, and the lesson scheme followed the same pattern used in poetry and movement during the first two days.

During the second week, the director of the Related Arts in Education Project, Dr. Ellis French, led the workshops devoted to using the ideas of the first week in developing practical lesson materials to be used in local classrooms in the following year. Participants received evaluation forms at the end of each session during the entire two weeks so that workshop leaders could get immediate feedback on how well the workshop was going. This was an excellent procedure because the leaders could make needed adjustments immediately. Dr. French has sent us copies of the cumulative evaluations, which were excellent.

We are especially interested in the effect of that workshop. The participants came from a large number of school systems in eastern Pennsylvania, and their degree of success in implementing MOPPET could be very important to us in shaping our approach to out-of-state adoptions.

Both the Wayne teacher training activities and those in the Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit were compromise versions of the original Woodbridge interdisciplinary workshop of the summer of 1974. However, both adopter workshops were effective because they included three very critical ingredients: (1) the participants received cumulative creative experiences in an interdisciplinary format; (2) they received a detailed explanation of MOPPET theory and lesson development; and (3) they had an extensive experience in developing lesson materials. In each case it will be desirable for the project to conduct Level III follow-up activities, and preliminary arrangements are being made to carry them out as the necessity arises.

TEAM LEADERS

In the first two chapters we have gone extensively into the theory and practice of the MOPPET lesson process. In the present chapter, we have discussed various ways of training teachers to use the process. Our motivation for writing this rather elaborate explanatory tract derives from our experience which indicated that most teachers know how to function in the traditional teaching mode, but--they do not know how to change to another mode. Apparently the act of teaching is conscious, but the style is not. Thus teachers do not have a frame of reference for identifying the characteristics that distinguish one style from another. They consider their teaching style to be the result of their attitude and teaching competence. They are not generally aware that their basic tendency is anchored in the authoritarian method.

We have especially noticed the incomprehension or masked confusion displayed by most teachers when they observe in MOPPET the shift of emphasis involved in moving from the teacher-centered mode to the student-centered mode. In the absence of extensive MOPPET orientation,

teachers are inclined to ignore this shift, or, if they take note of it, to view the change as either an undesirable relaxing of teacher control or a waste of time in seemingly aimless questioning of the children. In regard to our insistance on the importance of a well planned motivational INPUT and an in-depth culminating EXPERIENCE, the uninformed teacher frequently views these activities as unnecessary frills.

MOPPET training essentially involves a raising of the perception and understanding of the teacher to a higher level, from which he/she can view a given teaching task from the standpoint of having a choice of styles. Those teachers who are sincerely interested or involved in the broad concept of the arts and humanities will likely find this MOPPET multiple styles approach easy enough to assimilate because they are less likely to have a serious inhibiting bias. On the other hand, those teachers who have a strong attachment to the traditional teaching approach are apt to resist any alternative approach, including MOPPET.

Potential adopters are encouraged to select the initial team leaders from among those individuals who already show a strong interest in the concept of humanizing the curriculum through the arts. The character of the program is such that it can be carried forward without conflict even in a school that contains many teachers who have a traditional orientation. It is suggested that the early adoption efforts be focused on those teachers who are interested in the new approach, and allow time for the dynamics of the program to arouse the interest of the traditionalists.

TURNKEYS

There must be at least one person (and preferably two) among the team leaders who has a good basic understanding of the MOPPET process. It is not necessary that this person be personally able to teach effectively in all the different disciplines. However, it is necessary that he/she be able to discern what is truly valuable and what is merely superficial both in the arts and in the general curriculum. It would probably be easier to have the role filled by two people: one from the arts and one from the general curriculum area. However, it is possible occasionally to find the requisite background in one person. Since this person (or persons) is the key figure in the success or failure of the innovation, we will refer to him/her as the turnkey.

To describe the turnkey in terms of personality is useless because he/she may be a fire eating extrovert, a reclusive type, or any of the degrees in between. Therefore, we will confine our description to characteristics or qualities that seem essential.

The primary quality needed is the ability to com-

prehend the lessons of the program in terms of what each contributes in the human growth and development of the children. It must be kept in mind that the home, T-V and the movies take care of the childrens' need for entertainment, and that the regular curriculum and the school arts programs effectively handle skills and content. Therefore, the turnkey must ask the basic questions that relate to the unique role of the program: Does this MOPPET lesson add something to the aesthetic or interdisciplinary understanding that the regular school program does not? When a discipline is repeated (movement, for example), does it have a developmental character or is it merely a series of isolated experiences? Does the lesson contain an authentic creative experience?

In addition to the ability to perceive the basic program purposes, the turnkey should be able to help teachers with the technical problems they will face in carrying out the program. For example, if a lesson fails, the turnkey must be able to help teachers discover whether the lesson that failed is basically a bad lesson or, if not, what can be done to make it work. The turnkey must ask: Was the INPUT motivation presentation appropriate in terms of the objectives? Did the teacher give direction to the INTERACTION dialogue, or did he/she allow the dialogue to go off in unrelated directions? Was the control too strict--or too loose?

If the turnkey is not an administrator, he/she should be a person who can think in administrative terms in regard to schedules, released time, facilities, equipment and materials. It seems particularly valuable in this respect to have the ability to think in terms of alternatives. For example, if a school has a good filmstrip library, but no access whatever to 16mm films, the turnkey should be able to help teachers shape lesson ideas to the filmstrip format. If no separate MOPPET facility is possible at this time, perhaps a classroom could be modified to serve that purpose. If released time is difficult alternative ways should be found to work with teachers. Perhaps most important from the administrative standpoint is the realization that the momentum of teacher enthusiasm must be maintained. This can be achieved partly through making sure that teachers have what they need when they need it. But it is also essential that teachers be made to feel that their extra efforts are understood and appreciated.

Since the arts and humanities cover such a vast area, it is virtually impossible to sensibly describe the arts and humanities qualifications of the turnkey person in a few sentences. Nevertheless, we will make a few brief statements and leave it to the good sense of the reader to fill in the elaboration. Ideally the turnkey should have an in-depth training in at least one of the arts, partly for a knowledge of what structure means in the arts, but even more importantly to develop an understanding of the value of aesthetic insight. This aesthetic in-

sight is the basic ingredient that is commonly missing from the thought experience of students who are the products of a narrow academic training. Even when they achieve some degree of interdisciplinary thinking, their reasoning is usually so cognitive that they are not able to give serious weight to the subjective side of life, to the function of creativity or to the role of beauty.

The turnkey person should have this in-depth understanding of the importance of the arts and humanities in our everyday life. Also it is important that the turnkey person have a good understanding of and respect for the standard curriculum. MOPPET is a very flexible program, but this flexibility was built in primarily to accommodate the problems of the traditional school. In a way, it may appear as though we advocate that the turnkey be arts and humanities oriented and at the same time remain traditional. This is not really the case, but we recognize that to work constructively for change requires the insight to perceive what is good and essential in both the traditional practice and in the projected innovation. Thus it may be that the leadership role should be shared in order to get a good balance of expertise in both the general curriculum areas and in the arts and humanities. However, there are individuals who contain both dimensions. In any case, both visions are essential in the process of MOPPET adoption.

Summary: The MOPPET program has been in existance for over six years. The early years were devoted primarily to developing lesson methodology and in the production of lesson manuals. The lesson materials resulting from these efforts are available from the project at cost.

The later years of the program were increasingly taken up with the problems of teacher training. An earlier manual, MOPPET: How To Do It, gives a broad overview of the procedures involved in replicating the MOPPET program. However, the present manual focuses on the lesson process itself, and attempts to give insight into how teachers can learn to use that process.

There has been no attempt to generalize about the broad fields of innovation and teacher training, with which we assume the reader is already familiar. Rather we have tried to clarify those aspects of the MOPPET program that have caused the greatest problems for teachers. The approaches we advocate have resulted from a long period of search and of trial and error experimentation. We are not wholeheartedly pleased with our results, and the practices we have described will undoubtedly be further refined in future years. However, we have found that those practices outlined in this manual are effective in implementing the MOPPET process.

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